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Near East & South Asia

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Nasif Blames Israel for Islam's Poor Image

93AE0558A Riyadh AL-DA'WAH in Arabic 15 Jul 93
pp 19-21

[Interview with Dr. 'Abdallah 'Umar Nasif, secretary general of the Islamic World League, by Ibrahim Raf'at; place and date not given: "Enemies Will Not Solve Our Problems"; first three paragraphs are AL-DA'WAH introduction]

[Text] Dr. 'Abdallah 'Umar Nasif, secretary general of the Islamic World League, constantly tours the Islamic countries and visits Muslim minorities everywhere, where he meets with Muslims and ascertains their worries and problems. He zealously follows up their issues one by one.

He has an excellent grasp of the Muslims' world situation. In his short interview with AL-DA'WAH, he explained some of these issues. He also concentrated on the role of the Islamic media and its mission and message at the present time.

His Excellency made it clear that the media is a powerful weapon and not a means of recreation and amusement. He also discussed the Islamic community [ummah] and the division, strife, and destruction that corrupt it. This enables Islam's enemies, the Jews and others, to damage the Islamic community and hatch plots against Islam and Muslims. The following is the text of Dr. Nasif's interview:

[Raf'at] On the strength of your constant tours and follow up of Muslim conditions, how do you see them today?

[Nasif] The condition of Muslims today is no secret. They have been plundered for people's greed and subjected to civil strife and disasters. Recent events, which have targeted many areas of the Islamic world, require the efforts of righteous persons to search for ways of deliverance and lead the community to safety.

The media must play a big role in transforming the Islamic community from a state of weakness and division to strength and unity. This is the media's duty, since people have become dependent on the media in its various forms. Therefore, men of the media must be more trustworthy, so that they can offer the community what it needs, in order to rid itself of its negative aspects and develop positive qualities. In this way, the community can move forward and be looked up to and respected.

Community Problems

[Raf'at] You are well aware of our Islamic community's situation and the challenges and assaults it is going through that are aimed at finishing off Islam and the Muslims. This is all being done with no Islamic role being played. When and how will this role be achieved?

[Nasif] The fact is that the solution to our Islamic issues must come from within ourselves. It must be a Muslim solution, because we cannot place the blame on others. We stand and watch the bloody events to which our brothers all over the Islamic world are being exposed.

Our negative qualities and shortcomings must be corrected. First of all, there is the problem of straying from God's path, the pursuit of lusts, and the problem of inattention to basic issues and giving them priority. Accordingly, I emphasize the importance of reforming the individual and society and correcting their negative aspects. This matter is the responsibility of the media in all its various forms. It is also the responsibility of the Islamic Call, the ulema, and other institutions actively concerned with the call to Islam. We must correct the community's course by returning it to the true, divine path. In the Prophet's words: "Take the noble path night and day; stray not or be doomed."

The man who does not follow the path and program destined for him, how can he blame other people?

If we adhere to the path, we will prosper and be happy. If we lapse, the Muslims' situation will continue as it is now, in shame, wickedness, and disgrace.

Islamic Media

[Raf'at] In the course of your discussion, you referred to the media's role in community life. Do we have a media capable of presenting the Islamic issues properly?

[Nasif] It is true that in our Islamic world the media's materialism is very well developed, whether printed, visual, or audio. However, we must develop the idea that calls for unified thought, direction, and method of action. This could be the hope for which we strive.

We must also consider our positive aspects. We now have a conference of Muslim information ministers, with a secretariat general and a program that needs pushing. Our Islamic world needs correction of ideas, correction of certain concepts. The media is not a recreation problem nor a marginal problem. On the contrary, it is the most important weapon the community has, if it would spend good money on it and use it properly to change the community's situation.

Issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina

[Raf'at] With regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina, America announced that it would intervene militarily, and then backed away from that decision, while certain Islamic states have told the media that they would send forces to assist Muslims in Bosnia. What is your comment?

[Nasif] The issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina is a complicated one. Responsibility for it belongs to the United Nations, but Muslims must have an effective role. They now have trained troops there to support their brothers and to offer whatever equipment is needed to oppose the oppression and attacks. Moreover, Islamic nations have

already offered solutions and ideas and support for their brothers against the enemies of Islam.

It is also very important for Islamic nations to participate with troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, so that no provocation occurs by forces deployed there now under UN auspices. The presence of Islamic forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina is sorely needed at the present time.

Regarding the arms embargo, we want the UN to listen to its conscience and allow the Bosnians to obtain weapons to defend themselves. Arms should not be denied them.

Again, I call on the media to adopt the issue and push it to the forefront. They must endeavor to achieve security and stability in Bosnia.

[Rafat] At the Islamic conference in Karachi, the foreign minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina announced that Bosnia needs \$260 million now, whereas the Islamic nations collected \$80 million. He then announced that they would not need troops if they got that amount. What is your comment on the foreign minister's statement?

[Nasif] This cry was of great benefit since, after it was made, the custodian of the two holy mosques donated \$20 million, and his brother heads of state and kings were prompted to donate what they could. We hope, God willing, that the Islamic states through their governments and people will be generous with their money to help our brother Muslims in Bosnia to purchase the weapons they need to defend themselves. This is in addition to the Islamic nations' political position, which must be highlighted and supported by international organizations because of this issue's importance. Where is the human rights organization? Where is the Security Council? Where is the United Nations, and where is the new world order? Where, where?

After God, the Bosnian issue has only Muslims—leaders and people. It is a Muslim issue. They must assume this role and leave the search for solutions to others.

Kashmir

[Rafat] Let's turn from the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the problem of Muslims in Kashmir, and the al-Babri incident. The Indian Government refuses to rebuild it. Have not political pressures been put on the Indian Government—from the first—to deter it and compel it to rebuild the mosque?

[Nasif] Despite the fact that Muslims in India number 140 million, their situation—unfortunately—is very poor, to say nothing of the weakness of their brethren around them. They have been the target of a huge plot. Muslims everywhere must take a serious position against India, instead of being courteous and civil at the expense of our Muslim brothers there. We hold the Indian Government responsible for what happened to al-Babri, and it must rebuild the mosque.

Muslims have resources, but their faith is weak. Consequently, there is no will to defend their rights.

Attempt to Distort Islam's Image

[Rafat] In a report to one of the American networks, pictures of mosques were shown, and it was said that the mosque is the cradle of terrorism. How can one respond to these biased campaigns?

[Nasif] The truth is that Israel is working hard to distort the West's view of Islam. Studies have been published in the Arab League that indicate that Islam is a danger to the world, that it is extremist. Facts have been distorted. Things have been published that the media in the West has adopted, as have centers of learning, such as universities and research centers. We must make it clear to people that Islam was, and still is, a religion of love, cooperation, and brotherhood. It was the one that protected Jews and minorities. We find that minorities living in Islamic nations coexisted happily, tranquilly, with no fear for themselves or their property or goods. Islam has guaranteed them life in complete freedom.

Throughout time Muslims have not subjected minorities to any harm. The proof is that in every Islamic country there is a Christian minority, which has continued to coexist in security and peace for many years. This idea that Israel has circulated—conducting two seminars on this subject during the past two years—concentrates on warning about Islam, that it is the next danger threatening the world. It is very unfortunate that some of the media in our Islamic countries are adopting this nefarious idea and are circulating it without thinking. We must coordinate our efforts to explain the true Islam, and that it is the new world order (God willing), the next order despite its many enemies. The signs foretell that.

Islam and the New World Order

[Rafat] With regard to the new world order, what is the Islamic nations' role in this order?

[Nasif] Muslims have principles, ideals, and all the positive aspects that the new world order requires. The new order talks about, for example, equality, human rights, raising the standards of societies, and eliminating poverty, ignorance, and sickness. Islam has been offering all of this for 1,400 years. Muslims are negligent in this regard, since they do not offer the world any part of these principles that Islam has urged. On the contrary they fear that they will be looked at with scorn, because those who have those Islamic principles must not have negative aspects. The Muslims' situation now does not represent Islam.

We ought to make clear the new world order's need for Islam's political principles, upon which the economy, social structure, and politics can be based. Indeed, all aspects of life. Our lack of presentation of these matters is a deficiency on the part of Muslims.

[Rafat] Plots aimed at weakening and damaging the Islamic community are being hatched. What are the facts concerning the plots being carried out by the enemies of Islam at the present time?

[Nasif] Jews want to weaken the community of Islam, so that they can have victory and control over property. Yes, there are plots against Islam. Israel is working in

broad daylight. Through its media, research centers, and Jewish studies conducted by proficient experts, it publishes whatever will distort the image of Islam and Muslims. There are also elements in Western countries that help the Jews in planning and organizing plots against the Islamic community, aimed at weakening and threatening it by ideological, political, and social initiatives, leading to continuation of our backwardness.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Top PLO Official Condemns Economic Blockade*93AE0524A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic 2 Jun 93 p 8*

[Interview with 'Abdallah al-Hurani, PLO Executive Committee member, by Huda Hamudat; place and date not given: "Conversation with PLO Executive Committee Member 'Abdallah al-Hurani; Continued Blockade Against Iraq Designed To Obliterate its Effective Role"]

[Text] As we approached Mr. 'Abdallah al-Hurani, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, we were deeply concerned about the outcome of the current negotiations aimed at solving the Palestinian question, about the continued embargo against Iraq, as well as at the grim situation in which the forces of Arab liberation find themselves, their obvious inability to go past this phase and march on to play a more effective part in changing the Arab map as drawn by the American administration. We asked him whether he saw any relationship between the continued negotiations between Israel, the Palestinians, and other Arab parties in the erratic fashion we are now witnessing, and the question of the continued embargo against Iraq. This seems to be the prevalent view among a number of politicians.

He said: "This takes us back to the old question: Why was Iraq essentially singled out for hostilities? Iraq left itself wide open to attack because it fostered a situation in the area that spoke of a great Arab renaissance plan based on the creation of an Arab strategic force, whether at the military, political, or economic level. Such a force would counterbalance the American-backed Israeli entity, and hence pave the way for a balanced solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the area. This is precisely what the United States, the West, and Israel find unacceptable. Their separate wishes to strike at this Arab nationalistic plan coalesced, the end result being to give free play to American hegemony in the area and to what is known as the new world order according to American interests, particularly in the aftermath of the dismantling of the socialist military camp and the Soviet Union.

"The American Administration is now attempting—as it has in the past and still does today throughout the world—to ensure its interests and those of countries with close ties to it—more precisely Israel in our region—by imposing a solution that does not address our people's national rights. In fact, that solution is aimed at solving Israel's problem in the Arab world, by opening Arab capitals and markets to Israeli products and technology, and by creating a complete state of normalcy between Israel and the Arab world. This would ensure continued American interests and Israeli presence and would, in all certainty, be achieved at the expense of our Palestinian people. For this reason the way was opened for negotiations in the area. It would never have been opened with the present conditions attached—conditions which we

denounced as biased, unfair, worse, humiliating—had Iraq not been attacked by 30 nations. They now want to take advantage of the existing situation in the Arab world and impose the solutions that reflect this new order. This is why they are in a hurry to do so before something happens that might bring about sudden changes, and before the emergence of new national forces that might restore the state of equilibrium that existed during the days of the socialist military camp. It is therefore clear why Israel and the United States are still insisting on imposing their biased conditions on the Palestinian side and the Arab parties during the negotiations. This has provoked a head-on collision between two resolute intents, that of the Palestinian people—even at the lowest level of national aspirations—and that of the Americans and Israelis, as I have already mentioned. The negotiations are stumbling on these blocks, because the difference between the two intents is considerable.

"As for the continued blockade against Iraq, they undoubtedly want to persist in weakening Iraq so that it cannot effectively counter colonialist designs in the area. They maintain the blockade to continue obliterating Iraq's role, to keep it out of the way. They maintain the pressure on it so that it does not evolve into a strong base on which the Palestinian people can rely in their search for national rights. Motives for striking Iraq were therefore linked to motives for keeping the Arabs in a state of impotence, and for eliminating any possibility of equilibrium in the area that might bring about a balanced solution."

[Al-Hurani] added: "Iraq has its own native capabilities and powers, which will enable it to play its card regardless of what is happening. Iraq has enormous natural wealth, in terms of both oil and natural resources. World markets therefore need Iraq for marketing and exports, which means that Iraq's role and its economic place cannot be dispensed with for long. This facet of the question will play its part in cutting short the blockade without this hinging on any outside consideration."

[ALIF BA'] You spoke at length last year at the conference of Popular Forces about the crisis prevailing among the forces of the Arab movement for national liberation, and you stated that they have reached a dead end. One year has elapsed since the onset of the prevailing challenges. How would you define the crisis the Arab movement for national liberation is currently undergoing?

[Al-Hurani] With regard to the situation of the Arab liberation movement, I had my views, and I find that I am increasingly confirmed in such views. They are that the aggression against Iraq has revealed the truth about the members and the parties of the forces of the Arab liberation movement, meaning it has exposed their state of weakness. Iraq's struggle against aggression had presented them with a golden opportunity; it had provoked reactions on Arab streets the Arab liberation movement never dreamed of in all its history. However, because of its impotence, it was unable to transform this street

reaction into real action. It failed to shape, develop, and guide this popular movement, and place it in its genuine context. This is due to a lack of clear thinking and planning, to the movement's inadequate strategy, as well as the slackening of its leadership's resolve. If we wish to see these forces assume a truly effective role, we will have to bring about radical and genuine changes in their concept and development, to align them with the changes taking place in the area. The movement will have to devise new fighting tools, both intellectual and practical, in keeping with the new order of things. Similarly, it will have to find ways to recover its unity, not merely on the national, but also on the continental level. I am convinced that without such unity, the movement will find it impossible to have an impact on its institutions, and assume an effective role in breaking the blockade against Iraq, or at the very least in driving holes through it.

"Once again, I reiterate that the parties and forces of the Arab liberation movement need to review their agendas, rejuvenate their leaderships and cadres, redefine their intellectual, organizational, and political thinking, and refine their concepts of unity on the national level as well. There is more than one unit that calls itself the Congress of Popular Forces, and they always include the very same parties and the very same personalities. This is indicative, if anything, of the fact that regionalism is still rampant and that it controls the direction of the forces for Arab liberation.

[ALIF BA'] Until then, what can be done?

[Al-Hurani] I believe that the intellectuals and creative minds of this nation, including writers, poets, and artists, should assume a great responsibility in this phase to counter what I believe is the existence of a great wave of attacks waged by American Zionist aggressors and Arab reactionary elements. There is a fierce struggle being waged now aiming at transforming the political aims they succeeded in imposing on the area into intellectual gains to foist onto Arab minds for generations to come. Hence Saudi Arabia's attempts to take over all Arab means of communication overseas, whether written, broadcast, or telecast, to control the Arab mind. This is where the responsibility of Arab intellectuals comes into play, those intellectuals who have rejected the aggression, and who refuse to see Arab minds tampered with. It is up to them to find ways to counter this attack and protect the intellectual future of coming Arab generations from this onslaught. It is imperative to find a way to focus their combined efforts in order to stand up to these hostile attempts against Arab minds and Arab history. There were some areas that we considered safe and inviolate and that now are being shelved away as totally secondary. To be precise, I am referring to the concept of Arab unity, which is beginning to recede in Arab minds owing to recent developments. The question now is who is going to restore its fire, its vigor, if not the intelligentsia, since it is they who have to precede the politicians to the forefront of the battle. What is true for Arab unity is just as true for the Palestinian question and

the way it is slipping away from the forefront of Arab minds. Its solution is now deemed to be the concern of its people solely, whether that outcome reflects the expressed wish of some Palestinian parties, or the desire of some Arab quarters to unburden themselves of the Palestinian question. I believe it is up to Arab intellectuals to tackle this tremendous task, and engage in tireless efforts to rekindle interest in this important question.

Euro-Maghreb Relations Given Security Concerns

93AF0788A Algiers EL WATAN in French 3 Aug 93 p 7

[Interview with Andrea Amato, president of the EC Economic and Social Committee, by Ghania Oukazi, in Rome; date not given: "Algeria Does Not Constitute a Big Risk for Investors"; first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Rome—"The EEC's Economic and Social Committee is working to institute a Euro-Maghreb partnership far removed from any ideologizing on either side." That is what we were told during an interview granted in Rome by the committee's president, Andrea Amato.

[Oukazi] The EEC's Economic and Social Committee devotes a large part of its work to cooperation between the countries of the European Community and the Maghreb countries. How would you evaluate that cooperation?

[Amato] Since 1989, the committee has initiated a great many measures, for which I acted as reporter, aimed at formulating the problem of updating the European Community's policy toward the Mediterranean. The work began with a critical approach to the direction and results of that policy, which dated back to the 1970's and was concerned basically with commercial matters, the purpose being to strengthen exports to the Maghreb countries in particular. The result was that two years ago, we introduced new formulas such as regional cooperation and decentralized cooperation. And that was what gave rise, not without difficulty and with a great deal of concern, to the Euro-Maghreb partnership. The partnership program calls for us to have an annual meeting of the social partners—including, among others, the trade unions, employers, and government authorities of the EEC and UMA [Arab Maghreb Union]. The first such meeting was held in May of last year, and the second will take place in Tunis this coming 8, 9, and 10 September. The main objective is the creation of jobs in the Maghreb.

[Oukazi] The EEC is expressing a particular interest in the Maghreb countries. What is the reason for that interest? What are the objectives to be attained, especially as far as Algeria is concerned?

[Amato] The European Community is concerned to strengthen economic cooperation with the Maghreb not only for historical reasons or because we are neighbors, and even less because of a sense of guilt related to

colonial history, but above all because the Maghreb countries have formed themselves into a regional type of organization: the UMA.

From the standpoint of the Economic and Social Committee, that institution is a factor of great importance and great hope for the building of codevelopment. But it must be recognized that the way the UMA has developed has not been very satisfactory to us. All the more since it could very easily become only a semblance of a union. For that reason, we are not expecting progress in the area of economic integration. It is necessary first that the UMA be built on democratic foundations: that it provide itself with a parliament and a political executive body. We note that the UMA is a very long way from all that. But we are still urging our Maghreb friends to continue and strengthen that attempt.

Moreover, Algeria is experiencing special problems on both the political and the economic level. As regards the burden of its debt, we have made proposals for alleviating that problem. And some of those proposals have been accepted by the commission, one example being the granting of a special credit for the national budget with no strings attached, unlike what happens when the IMF is involved. Our concern is to keep from doing further harm to the Algerian economy, especially at the social level.

[Oukazi] Is the political instability in Algeria a handicap when it comes to putting together economic programs between the two parties?

[Amato] Political relations with Algeria at the moment are determined by the attitudes of certain member states rather than by the Community as such. Since the signing of the Maastricht treaty, the Community's room for maneuver has been reduced considerably when it comes to taking a stand on external situations. The case of Yugoslavia is enlightening in that respect.

To this day, the EEC has not succeeded in taking a clear stand on that serious problem. So what is happening in Algeria is assessed differently by each of the member countries. For our part, we feel that that instability does not pose a major risk to investment. We also feel that the financial centers in the European economic powers might have had less problematical access to Algeria if the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] had won than they do at present. This does not mean that the doors are closed, but we are saying that many things need to be improved.

[Oukazi] Have you discussed those matters with Algerian authorities? Do you favor specific sectors?

[Amato] Yes, we have in fact expressed our opinion of the institutional and legislative framework and the related environment such as banking services, which need to be completely reformed. But in bringing up problems of that kind, we run the risk of encountering an ideological perception of things on both sides. For example, an insistence on privatization at all costs and a free-trade attitude as a precondition for any economic

improvement. In such a case, one would have no choice but to defend useless and archaic methods for developing the Algerian economy. As far as favoring a particular sector is concerned, the issue does not present itself in terms of sectors but in terms of investment quality. We could always go back to the idea of location—of subcontracting in the textile industry—as was done in Morocco and Tunisia. But we do not want to see the Algerian market reduced to that. Our objective is to achieve industrial complementarity with the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

[Oukazi] Are there specific programs for that purpose?

[Amato] As you know, we have begun talks for the establishment of free-trade zones in Tunisia and Morocco. We feel that we should not rush things and that it would be better to establish them as the industrial sector in both countries develops and modernizes itself in solid fashion.

Otherwise, the initiative will go straight downhill, thus leading to the destruction of those countries. Our criticism of the commission has to do with the fact that contacts of that kind are being made in a bilateral manner and that free trade is occurring vertically. Such a situation does nothing at all to strengthen codevelopment. We would like to see trade take place within a regional framework.

In Algeria's case, the government has not yet expressed to the EEC a need to establish a free-trade zone. And in fact, doing so is not in its interest at the moment. It is more important today to improve the productive structure and develop new economic niches as well as agriculture in order at least to achieve an acceptable level of self-sufficiency. Otherwise, Euro-Maghreb partnership will amount to no more than a reappropriation of the Maghreb by the European countries.

ALGERIA

Somalia: UN Forces Raise Fear; People Held Hostage

93AF0806A Algiers EL WATAN in French 10 Aug 93
p 1

[Commentary by Mohammed Larbi: "Some Blood in the Flour"]

[Text] How very strange is the situation being experienced by Somalia, a country racked by a civil war and in which, strangely enough, the intervention of UN forces is raising fear. Somalis, who had somewhat regained hope, live in fear of reprisals after each operation by General Farah Aidid's men.

A new war is emerging in this country, taking an entire population hostage. The UN forces, who want to settle their score with the warlord who has been called a terrorist and have put a price on his head, no longer seem

to pay attention to details. The raids are always imprecise, even giving the impression that the Blue Helmets are practicing collective punishment. Look at these helicopters that launch their missiles on targets said to belong to the enemy, but without proof.

In the best of cases, the operation's spokesmen "will regret" these "errors," but the damages are on a scale with the fears of Somalis who have already lost many of their own in expeditions carried out by the Blue Helmets who have been accused of exceeding their mandate. Accused, first of all, by the Somalis, many of whom see in them a new occupation force.

Next it was within the UNSOM [UN Operations in Somalia] that the biggest divergences appeared with, in particular, the reserve troops from Italy, which redeployed its contingent. But the most important answer comes from the ranks of the United Nations itself with an analysis by one of its observers (an American) who questions the legality of the actions of the UN's forces.

So what remains of an operation that began with sacks of rice and is continuing in blood? The spectacle, which unfolded six months ago on the beaches of Mogadishu, is now turning into a nightmare.

Upcoming Talks With IMF; Rescheduling Strategy

93AF0793D Algiers EL WATAN in French 17 Aug 93
pp 1, 2

[Article by Mourad Hadersi: "Upcoming Negotiations in Washington"; first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Relations between Algeria and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reached the point of no return. The two sides are to settle the matter around the end of September.

A delegation comprising the Algerian negotiators will go to Washington during the second half of September to discuss a possible agreement with the Bretton Woods institution. The Algerian mission intends to convince the other side that Algeria cannot sign any agreement without an IMF guarantee.

That guarantee may take the form of a pledge by the international institution to provide funds for a period to be stipulated in the agreement.

In view of Algeria's refusal to reschedule its debt, the possible agreement seems closer to a multilateral reorganization, which, it should be remembered, has reportedly been suggested. In a recently published document setting forth the government's guidelines, reference is made to that type of reorganization. It is even reported that exchanges of views aimed at outlining such a solution have started.

That operation, which would depend on the existence of an agreement with the IMF, would reportedly deal

simultaneously with the guaranteed debt and the non-guaranteed debt in cooperation with the creditors as a whole, who would form a single club—the Club of the Friends of Algeria—to be established for that purpose with the participation of the international institutions. Only Abdesselam's team seems to have any information on such a club.

Algeria's interest in that possible solution as a substitute for rescheduling is due, the government says, to the fact that "there would be only one negotiation instead of a separate negotiation with each of the creditors' clubs."

But it also points out that that solution "is not without its faults," because it might have the effect of "reserving all or part of the increase in earnings from exports of [text missing] may total from \$3 billion to \$3.5 billion during the three-year period. But the acceptance or rejection of those conditions would be "a political act of considerable importance and one whose adoption should be surrounded by complete transparency because of the terms and conditions and the effect that it might have on society," according to the government's document.

The head of the government intends to initiate that transparency by sponsoring a seminar in September on the economic choices.

The Algerian negotiators, who have not been authorized to suggest the slightest commitment during negotiations with the IMF's experts, will be among the guests at the seminar. They will be responsible for testing the consensus before flying to Washington.

Closer Ties to South Africa Anticipated

93AF0794B Algiers EL WATAN in French 12 Aug 93
p 1

[Article by Tayer Belghiche: "Diplomatic Relations With South Africa Coming Soon"]

[Text] Relations are thawing between Algeria and South Africa, two countries, which until now, have been completely estranged owing to Pretoria's apartheid policy.

The decision to establish formal ties between Algiers and Pretoria reportedly was made sometime after 30 June, following the visit to South Africa of an official Algerian delegation.

According to reliable sources, the two countries will open commercial missions in the near future as a first step.

Exchange of ambassadors is expected to follow early next year. Why has Algeria, a country bitterly opposed to the South African regime, decided to establish ties at this time? Sources note that the first contacts were made in the domain of sports. According to a diplomatic source, it was the ANC [African National Congress] that urged Algeria to open a mission in South Africa.

Many countries in southern Africa, not to mention Morocco and Egypt, have opened embassies in Pretoria,

and Tunisia soon may follow suit. Seeing these developments, the ANC invited friendly countries with which it has maintained historically close ties to do likewise, if only to provide moral support in its negotiations with the South African Government. This is the reason for Algeria's initiative.

Algeria was reluctant at first but decided to go ahead once convinced that the racial discrimination policy in force since 1948 was completely abolished, at least from the statute books, and that negotiations between Frederik de Klerk and Nelson Mandela were moving toward a solution conforming to the wishes of South Africa's blacks.

For its part, the De Klerk government by establishing ties to one of Africa's most important countries—a country in the vanguard of the struggle against apartheid—will bolster its credibility on the African continent and end its diplomatic isolation once and for all.

Establishment of relations between the two countries could thus be described as the fruit of ANC's struggle.

Extortion Said New 'Terrorist' Tactic

93AF0793B Algiers EL WATAN in French 15 Aug 93
p 1

[Article by Mohamed Lamine: "Vile Blackmailing of Industrialists"; first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] Algerian industrialists and businessmen are said to be facing a new kind of crime: the protection racket. Extorting money by threatening to destroy production goods or kill the owner seems to be the new financing creed adopted by the armed Islamic groups.

Holdups having become too risky, security guards more seasoned, and the outcome of hostage taking more uncertain as far as the terrorists are concerned, the armed groups have been using a new form of financing for some time now: they send threatening letters to industrialists in the Algiers and Mitidja regions and see to it that the recipients of those letters take them very seriously. To do so, they arrange to visit one of the addressee's plants as a way of saving: "Like the OAS [Secret Army Organization], we strike whenever we please!"

The threats are directed primarily against the life of the businessman or his family, but also against his production apparatus. Sometimes the threats are turned into promises of protection against racketeers. Cases reported to the public are very rare because the one who agrees to pay is compelled to keep silent. Genuine "omerta" is the rule, since the one being "protected" is bound to be totally discreet about his "protector" on penalty of death. The case most widely reported in the media was that of General Abderrahim, a retired Army officer who went into business. He was the victim of an attack in front of his factory in Rouiba.

Although no official theory has been advanced concerning the possibility that the protection racket was involved, rumors concerning a failed attempt to extort funds are more than plausible.

Now the talk is about an industrialist who reportedly handed over 6 million dinars[DA] to the terrorists to ensure that his factories, located in a fundamentalist stronghold, would be protected from any attack. Because things presumably did not go too well with the other industrialists in the region, the terrorists returned to the attack by going back to the alleged beneficiary of their protection.

Because it is true that the more you have, the more you want, this time the terrorists demanded DA20 million—that is, 2 billion centimes. He refused to pay and, fearing for his life, took off for France, turning the management of his numerous holdings over to a trusted executive. His exile is punctuated by brief and discreet visits to Algeria in preparation for selling all his factories for a song.

After the intellectuals, university people, and researchers who have gone into exile, businessmen, merchants, and industrialists are joining them at the same rate—that is, a rate dangerous to the country's economy. How can we expect to attract a foreign investor when we are incapable of protecting the domestic investor?

Link of FIS Lawyer to 'Terrorist' Network Noted

93AF0805C Algiers EL WATAN in French 16 Aug 93
pp 1, 3

[Article by R. Rashed: "An FIS Lawyer Is Implicated"]

[Text] The terrorist Rabah Remit was arrested on 28 July in Birkhadem at the home of lawyer Ahmed Si Mozrag where he was hiding at the behest of Belkacem Tadjouri, a member of the Majdlis Es-Shura of the now banned FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] who has also been arrested for his role in several murderous terrorists attacks.

Rabah Remit is known to have coordinated the armed raids committed by several terrorist groups, including the attacks against the security forces on 5 July 1992 in the Boudouaou El-Bahri region to the east of Algiers that killed five policemen. This dangerous terrorist was also named many times in the trial relating to the airport raid heard in May by the Special Court of Algiers.

Remit had taken up residence in the apartment of Ahmed Si Mozrag who gave him a home at the request of Belkacem Tadjouri. That is where the security services arrested him and the lawyer's son Yacine on 28 July. Ahmed Si Mozrag is only one of a group of lawyers who provided legal defense to the leaders of the former FIS at their trial before the military tribunal in Blida.

Residing since 1980 as a lawyer in Saint-Ouen (in the French department of Seine Saint-Denis), thanks to the help of General Bigeard and president of an association

known as "Abaad El-Islam" created in 1981. Ahmed Si Mozrag discovered affinities with the Government of Iran. He orchestrated the mullahs' campaign against writer Salmon Rushdi.

It is also reported that he had frequent contacts with Rashed Ghannouchi, the leader of Tunisia's Islamic movement Al-Nahdah, which is known to represent Tunisia's hard-line Islamists. But that is not all. Si Mozrag also made ties to the FAF (Algerian Brotherhood in France). At a meeting organized by the FAF last April, he spoke virulently against his country of birth, stating that "Algeria is a state that should not exist."

Concurrently, he established sympathetic ties to Imam Abdelkader Sahnouni, a virulent Islamist who has long resided in Paris.

Si Mozrag also made several trips to Brittany (in northern France) to meet sympathizers of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of France's extreme right-wing National Front, and to seek out arms supply networks.

He has done much to help the ex-FIS. For example, the association "Abaad El-Islam," which he heads in France, is an extension of Algerian fundamentalists and raises funds to finance terrorist groups.

Along those very lines, based on information contained in the book *Born in the Suburbs*, by journalist Farid Aichoune, EL WATAN reported in its 2 December 1991 edition that Si Mozrag's association had received a check for 1 million dollars in funds for the FIS from a Saudi Arabian businessman, Youcef Djamil Abdelatif.

Ahmed Si Mozrag categorically denied that report in an interview given to EL WATAN on 22 June 1992. He claimed that his association conducted purely scientific activities and that it received funding from members in several Muslim countries as well as from private donors.

According to Si Mozrag, the funds that are raised are used to carry out scientific and charitable projects.

Moreover, he categorically denies reports of his contacts with the former FIS, stating that the FIS is not active in France.

'Influential' Member of MIA Arrested

93AF0793C Algiers EL WATAN in French 17 Aug 93
p 3

[Article by Soraya S.: "The Noose Is Tightening"]

[Text] The arrest of several activists means that the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA) has just suffered some heavy losses. A few days ago—last 28 July—the security services apprehended an influential member of the "emergency committee" of the Islamic Salvation Front (the FIS, now dissolved) named Belkacem Tadjouri.

That news, confirmed the next day by clandestine radio station "Wafa," has just been made public. Belkacem

Tadjouri was arrested along with Renit Rabah and Yacine Si Mozrag in the very office of attorney Si Mozrag, the lawyer for the former FIS, in Birkhadem. Following the dissolution of the FIS in March 1992, an "emergency committee" was set up with seven members, among them Mohamed Said and Abderrazak Redjam, who are now fugitives and who are said to be behind all the clandestine communiques calling for "jihad"—in other words, for crime and sabotage.

Tadjouri, 40, is a native of Oran and the employee of a state-owned firm. A member of the "Majlis Echoura," he emerged just after the arrest of Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj on 30 June 1991. Abdelkader Hachani made him a member of the FIS National Executive Bureau in August 1991.

He was in charge of all matters related to the party's organization. He went underground after the legislative elections were canceled. He was mentioned several times during the trial of the perpetrators of the attack on the Algiers airport. During that trial, he was mentioned by Hocine Abderrahim as participating, along with Cheboubi Abdelkader, Said Makhloufi, Mansouri Meliani, Bennabi Saada, and Abdennacer El-Eulmi, in the MIA Constituent Congress held in Zbarbar. Also according to Hocine Abderrahim, Tadjeri gave him 200,000 dinars with which to purchase weapons. According to Soussene Said's confession, Tadjeri was one of those who organized the assassination of the six police officers in Boudouaou. On that subject, when being questioned during his trial by the presiding judge of the Algiers Special Court, Soussene Said stated: "On the night of the crime, I was at Rabah Remit's home in Thenia, along with Mahieddine and Salah El Mandhali. It was they who brought me into the Boudouaou operation. They asked me to participate, but I immediately refused because things were moving too fast and I was afraid of not achieving the objective, since the operation was not well planned."

Belkacem Tadjouri was in direct contact with lawyer Si Mozrag. In fact, it was Tadjouri who reportedly asked lawyer Si Mozrag to let Remit Rabah stay in his office in Birkhadem.

Continuing Bread Shortages Reported

93AF0793A Algiers ALGER REPUBLICAIN in French
8 Aug 93 p 3

[Article by Youcef Rezzoug]

[Text] Bread is still scarce in Algiers. The persistent shortage of that staple is creating new habits in the capital. Endless lines begin to form around the bakeries in the early hours of the morning. It is not unusual to hear the announcement at 0700: "There is no more bread." A few moments is all it takes for the bakers to sell their first batches of loaves. Latecomers beware! "Sleep late or get some bread"—that is the new dilemma facing residents of Algiers.

By noon, the bakeries are completely deserted. Not a single chunk of bread is to be had. Anyone who missed out in the morning has one last chance: to beg the corner restaurant owner to let him have one or two loaves. Success is not guaranteed. In case of failure, the only solution is to eat pancakes at 8 or 10 dinars each. One must defend one's reputation as a bread eater.

But why is the shortage lasting so long? After all, we were assured that the interruptions in flour deliveries were due to the dockworkers' strike. Since then the docks have returned to their normal activity. But bread is still scarce. Now that the port strike is over, what will the next excuse be?

Some bakers say the crisis is occurring because people at Eriad [five food industry enterprises] are on vacation. One of them was careful to remind us that this shortage of flour has become traditional.

There are supply problems every summer. Why is Eriad unable to plan ahead? Moreover, several bakers feel that the quotas are not distributed equally. And they see no improvement on the horizon.

Some have not hesitated to "specialize" in semolina bread. It is better than nothing. Unless Algerian eating habits are changed completely. But is that not the objective being sought by means of this shortage? There is already talk of a sizable reduction in flour imports.

Tizi Ouzou: Long-Term Fire Damage Described

93AF0806D Algiers EL WATAN in French 9 Aug 93
pp 1, 3

[Article by Said Gada: "Tizi Ouzou: Victims Await Assistance"—first paragraph is EL WATAN introduction]

[Text] In addition to the lost possessions and human lives, the fire that swept through a large area of Kabylia one month ago will certainly in the long term produce an ecological imbalance.

To reconstitute the forests, decades are necessary. As for those who were burned, they will carry the scars on their bodies forever. The victims of Beni Douala and the Ouadhias are still suffering martyrdom. Will relief and real assistance come one day? You cannot put a price on the damage; it was a journey into horror.

The Ouadhias. The valley is suffocating. The summits of the majestic Djurdjura massif are still covered by wispy fog in the morning. The streets of the village live at a seasonal pace. By the side of the road vendors, most of them young (sometimes they are children) display their merchandise (watermelons, vegetables, etc.) on the ground. The mountain that overlooks the village provides a sad panorama. Everything is ashes.

A look backward: it is 4 July 1993. Preparations for the Youth and Independence Festival are well under way. The small town was going to celebrate this anniversary in a very special way.

In the early hours of the morning, a fire breaks out. The cause, we were told, was the burning of trash and garbage at the public dump. It should furthermore be noted in passing that this dangerous practice (burning at public dumps throughout the week, day and night) has become the rule everywhere.

Here is the testimony of one volunteer: "When we saw the first smoke we quickly organized to encircle the fire. Our speed was the right thing. We brought it under control without too much damage."

But what would be the main event occurred some distance from the first fire, on national highway 30. The forest started to burn again. The role of volunteers this second time was ineffectual. The fire was devouring everything in its path. The wind came up. It blew the flames vigorously and stirred the fire, spreading it at a dizzying speed.

Several moments later, Taguemout Lejdid, a village several hundred meters away from where the fire had started, was already threatened by the flames.

One young man whom we met as we entered the village, told us this: "We saw the fire coming and we couldn't do anything. The flames were as high as the smoke. The fire was moving violently from one tree to the other. We couldn't even save what could have been saved. There were balls of fire separated from the rest that were moving."

"Houses burned, animals, everything. As for me, I lost all my sheep, which were my only resource. Yesterday we saw hell and tomorrow we no longer know how to live. We've lost everything."

The blackness of the walls of buildings is visible from afar. The smoke saw to it that things got repainted. The electricity, which was cut off then, has still not been reestablished. Inhabitants of the village, who were extensively traumatized by these flames of death, are waiting with a great deal of impatience for the lights to come back on.

At-Zmenzer, a commune on the outskirts of the village, went through the same torments. A cabinetmaker there lost his workshop with a supply of wood estimated to be worth several tens of millions of centimes.

The damage is extensive. An apocalyptic view greets the eye. The conflagration was everywhere.

Hundreds of hectares went up in smoke. All of this forest wealth has been reduced to ashes.

Nothing remains of these centuries-old olive trees and these fruitful cork oaks but their burned skeletons. Just

ghostly silhouettes. A real catastrophe for the environment. In the wake of the disappearance of this thick forest, another danger lies in wait: soil erosion. Since the terrain is hilly, the return of the rains will produce yet more damage.

Without doubt the most battered commune is At-Mahmoud in the daïra of Beni-Douala. The villages of Tizi-Hibel and Taguemout Azzouz were the most severely affected. And it was in that very same latter village that the fire produced the heaviest toll: five people dead (two elderly women, one pregnant woman, and one of her children), 17 people seriously burned. According to the first estimates, 38,700 olive trees and 3,000 other trees were burned in this dreadful tragedy. Seventeen houses were totally destroyed and more than 10 other homes partially destroyed, according to information that could be gleaned on site.

For the time being, the families whose homes were destroyed have found shelter with neighbors or relatives. "But for how long?" one fire victim cried out angrily.

One village resident who witnessed the frightful disaster provided this account: "The fire reached the village on 4 July at 1400. People organized in a rare show of spontaneity. Our village is a 'red zone.' Fires are common here. But this time, alas, we couldn't handle the fire. It cut the village in two. The volunteers were thrown into confusion. Panicked residents tried to flee their homes. And what a scene. Those fleeing could not save themselves because they were surrounded by the fire. It was unbearable. The air was heavy and full of smoke. If you were fighting the fire in front of you, it was behind you. Day and night we did our best to extinguish it. The means were rudimentary, nonexistent. The presence of women backing up the men gave us courage. It was a nightmare. We had never seen such a fire."

On the faces of residents a great sadness and a deep sorrow are written. Especially since it robbed them of five of their own: "It was very painful. We buried six dead the same day. Even during the major epidemics early this century, we didn't bury that many dead in one day. This time we weren't even able to look one last time and say goodbye, the bodies were so burned," one witness to the tragedy reported.

The extent of the repercussions of this tragedy will still be measurable in economic terms in the years to come. The region, whose main resource is growing olive trees, will be cut off from its primary wealth: olive oil. The olive trees, the fig trees, and the table grapes, which once nourished quite a few families will no longer produce!

The DEC (Communal Executive Delegation), which was set up on the day of the fire, has recorded all the complaints of its constituents, it was stated. The head of the DEC who received us in his office was completely overwhelmed. He blamed the press which, according to him, "hasn't said a word about the fire," and deplored the absence of the authorities who have given him no aid except moral support. He said, in substance: "I have

nothing to say to you. Until my final report has been finalized, there is no way I can give you any official information whatsoever. I must first inform my superiors in the hierarchy." In defense of the man we were speaking with, we should say that it obviously takes a lot of time to write a report.

Beyond the sad sight of this region, which has been totally ravaged by the fire, big questions remain. In the last analysis was this fire something sent by fate? Is pyromania a new fad? Do we know the motives of the pyromaniacs? Is it impossible to predict these disasters? Or does the forest service have sufficient means to serve its mission?

Is the civil defense supplied with sufficient equipment to cope with such disasters?

Aren't the thousands of hectares of forests and the human lives that are lost each year worth more than the price of this equipment?

Are the People's Communal Assemblies [APC] opening up enough field lanes? Have brush-clearing campaigns become a ritual?

In specific terms, on the ground, will there be a response to these questions? Beni-Douala is not an isolated case. Other disasters could occur.

Can the state respond favorably to the expectations of disaster victims? Does a special budget for disaster areas exist?

As it waits to put the administrative machinery into gear to come and assist the fire's victims, the volunteer movement can indeed do what it can. Entertainments, parties, drives, and collections of gifts may be organized and the proceeds will go to help the victims. Why not? But in the same way we should proceed as quickly as possible with brush-clearing campaigns.

Criminal Involvement in Forest Fires Dismissed

93AF0803A Algiers EL WATAN in French
10 Aug 93 p 3

[Article by Katia Debouz: "A 'Normal' Year"]

[Text] For days now, flames have ravaged the forests of the Mediterranean basin, destroying hundreds of hectares of plant cover.

Forest fires have taken a serious toll in Algeria despite the efforts of fifteen well-staffed and well-equipped mobile units stationed in wooded areas.

One month ago, the region of Kabylia experienced damage on a scale that has yet to be fully assessed by the National Forest Office. More recently, three fires broke out in the localities of Tadmaït, Akfadou, and Tala-Guillef in the region of Tizi-Ouzou. Fanned by strong winds, the fires took hold among the highly flammable tree species that are common in the region's forests.

The first of the fires to break out in Tizi-Ouzou resisted the efforts of fire-fighting teams for nearly five days. Detachments had to be brought in from units in Algiers, Boumerdes, Bouira, and M'Sila to supplement the Tizi-Ouzou unit. In all, it took 800 to 1,000 men to extinguish the flames. Still, 13,000 hectares [ha] were damaged. In addition, the Kabylia region reported 13 forest fires between Wednesday and Friday affecting 125 ha.

The same scenario occurred in Bousfer (Oran) where 72 ha—including 22 ha of Aleppo pines—caught fire in similar circumstances.

Thus far, the conclusions drawn from the Civil Defense inquiries into the origin of the fires do not support the theory that they may have been set by arsonists. Unusually hot, dry weather and accidents involving high-tension wires are thought to be the more likely causes.

In any case, the office that manages Civil Defense assures that this summer's forest fires are no more devastating than the fires of previous summers, the year of reference being 1983 when 150,000 ha of woodland were ravaged. Only 406 fire-fighting operations have taken place this year, making 1993 a "normal" year.

Nonetheless, vigilance is necessary in order to avoid ecological catastrophes, the consequences of which are gauged in terms of the preservation of Algeria's forest resources. These require time and money in order to regenerate.

While fires of criminal origin are not to be ruled out for the days ahead, political arsonists have already been brought before the courts; the danger may also lie elsewhere. The period of hot weather that has settled over a large portion of the country is also conducive to forest fires.

Safety is born of prevention, the saying goes, and prevention should be the starting point of fire-fighting efforts.

Vast expanses of forest are not monitored for want of look-out posts. The few forest rangers who watch over them often lack the means as well as the authority backed by strong legal penalties to deter the actions of the masterminds of arson.

Hiring additional forest rangers, maintaining ditches and creating firebreaks are relatively inexpensive steps that should be enacted systematically throughout Algeria's forested areas. In some provinces, an effort to recruit temporary forest workers for special operations was launched just prior to the start of the hottest period of the year, as a way of providing jobs to young people.

Summertime is becoming synonymous with forest fires, and every summer we are reminded of the need for comprehensive stewardship of our forest resources which contribute significantly to the nation's economy.

Actions undertaken, and some of them have produced results. But if we look no farther, we run the risk of failing to see the forest for the trees.

Blida: Economy Said Targeted in Fires

93AF0803B Algiers *EL WATAN* in French
19 Aug 93 p 3

[Text] Almost 520 quintals of semolina, eight trucks, and a bus were destroyed by arson in Blida, the security services announced yesterday in a statement to the press.

The unidentified armed terrorists responsible for the attack entered a warehouse run by ERIAD [five food industry enterprises] (formerly SEMPAC) at one o'clock in the morning.

The fire they set also destroyed a large number of empty packing bags. ERIAD has been forced to shut down for one month. That same night, a security unit from Sidi-El-Kebir was attacked by terrorists. On Tuesday in Oum El-Bouaghi, according to the same source, another group of terrorists set fire to two trucks loaded with 8 metric tons of oil and 3 metric tons of sugar.

This was not the first time that such attacks have occurred. Several months ago, terrorists waged a mad campaign against public property in all sectors. They set fire to public goods, automobile tires, trucks, and buses.

In late July, seven vehicles belonging to SONELGAZ [National Electricity and Gas Company] in Chelf were set ablaze and automatic vending machines were sabotaged. What brand of terrorism is this, which does not even flinch at setting fire to semolina, a staple of the Algerian table? For how long will "irresponsible individuals" continue to sabotage telephone lines and set fire to buses? They do not even realize that those who suffer most from economic sabotage are the ordinary citizens of this country.

Construction of Hassi R'mel; Security Noted

93AF0794A Algiers *ALGER REPUBLICAIN* in French
3 Aug 93 p 2

[Article by Houria Ait-Kaci, APS: "Triumph of Algerian Technology"]

[Text] Algerian, Maghrebian, and European housewives lighting their kitchen stoves little suspect the immensity of Algeria's Hassi R'mel natural gas field, the complexity of the technology, or the hard work that goes into the process—3,408 people working shifts around the clock to supply them with the fuel.

This feeling was brought home to journalists during a research trip to the field that SONATRACH [National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons] organized for Algerian, Moroccan, Spanish, and Portuguese reporters in connection with initiation of the Maghreb-Europe Gas Pipeline (GME) project, more

specifically yesterday's conclusion of a contract with Bechtel for construction of the 530-km Algerian segment up to the Moroccan border.

Since the first well was drilled in 1956, Hassi R'mel—situated 550 km south of Algiers, halfway to Ghardaia and Laghouat, extending over an area of 3,500 square kilometers—has been one of the world's largest natural gas fields, with 2,700 billion cubic meters [m^3] of recoverable reserves. In 1992 it produced some 89 billion m^3 of gas, of which half was sold and the other half reinjected.

The veritable heart of Algeria's natural gas industry, producing liquid casing head gas, condensate, and LPG [liquefied petroleum gas], Hassi R'mel is the starting and ending point for all the gas pipelines supplying Algerian and overseas markets. Hassi R'mel provides 60 percent of the inputs, the press was told by Mr. Laouadi, regional director for the giant field.

Hassi R'mel consists of four processing plants or modules, two reinjection stations (to maximize recovery), close to 300 production and injection wells, a computer-assisted maintenance system (MAO), and dozens of pipelines.

No Assistance

The entire production process is managed by Algerians, including 230 engineers and 600 technicians. There has been no international technical assistance for the last 10 years, Mr. Laouadi told journalists, who were impressed by the managerial prowess Algerians have demonstrated in mastering such an advanced technology, especially since a \$140-million program to modernize facilities at the complex is now under way.

The proof of that mastery is the uninterrupted operation of its installations, including the eastern pipeline (Transmed), which has carried more than 110 billion m^3 to Italy via Tunisia since 1981 "without a single breakdown or interruption." Italian clients are "very satisfied" and organized a celebration to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the pipeline, whose 16-billion m^3 capacity will be increased to 24 billion by 1996 by installation of two compression stations.

At the Hassi R'mel well, which the journalists visited, a production manager explained that all wells are fitted with security systems, including an internal shutoff valve that stops the flow of gas automatically in case of bombardment. By way of example, he noted that if Kuwait's wells had had this system, they would not have caught fire during the Gulf war.

Hassi R'mel started preparing long ago for completion of the western or Maghreb-Europe pipeline, which is to furnish natural gas to Spain via Morocco and to Portugal via Spain starting in 1996, and in a subsequent phase to supply France and Germany and link up with the European pipeline network.

Orders totaling 3 billion dinars [DA] have already been placed for the pipe, part of which will be imported and the rest produced locally at Anabib and Sider. "Everything's ready. We're only waiting for the signing," said Mr. Laouadi.

May 1994

Construction work on the pipeline is expected to begin 10 months after Saturday's contract with Bechtel enters into force. Out of the six companies that responded to a 1992 call for bids, U.S.-based Bechtel was chosen because of its expertise and international experience, according to Mr. Abderrahim, director of SONATRACH's development and research division.

Construction under the contract will cost \$305 million and DA3.2 billion over a 24-month period. In addition, worker housing will be provided by Cosider at a cost of \$276 million.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing \$240 million of the financing for the Algerian segment, with additional financing to come from American, French, and German export credits.

The schedule calls for completion of GME's first phase in October-November 1995, by which time all countries involved are supposed to have finished the segments going through their territory, for which they are responsible. Total cost of the project is close to \$2.7 billion.

The first-phase segments are as follows:

1. 530-km segment from Hassi R'mel to the Moroccan border, at a cost of \$830 million.
2. 525-km segment in Morocco, with two in-country compression stations, at a cost of \$1 billion.
3. A 46-km segment of 22-inch pipe across the Straits of Gibraltar, at a cost of \$220 million.
4. The segment from Tarifa to Cordova (Spain), at a cost of \$370 million.
5. The 500-km segment from Cordova to Portugal, at a cost of \$400 million.

The first phase of the GME will start carrying products in early 1996. Its initial capacity at the Algeria-Morocco border will be 7.2 billion m^3 per year, but in successive phases capacity will be augmented by new compression stations, ultimately reaching 18.5 billion m^3 per year, said SONATRACH general manager Abdelhak Bouhafs.

Discussing Algeria's natural gas policy, the SONATRACH executive said GME will enable Algeria to meet its export target of 60 billion m^3 , half of which will be in the form of LNG [liquefied natural gas], thanks to renovation work on the liquefaction plants, including modernization of the GL-1-Z complex at Arzew, another Bechtel project. "GME is the keystone of our natural gas marketing policy and constitutes a future vector for new marketing initiatives," Bouhafs said.

"We never doubted the future of natural gas," added the SONATRACH executive, noting that SONATRACH has 30 years of experience in natural gas production and commercialization, "and its reputation for reliability and technical expertise is recognized by our natural gas partners."

EGYPT

Security Reinforcement for Israeli, US Embassies

93AF0757C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
1 Aug 93 p 3

[Unattributed article: "Severe Steps Concerning the Israeli and American Embassies in Cairo"]

[Text] Cairo—The Egyptian Ministry of the Interior strengthened the security measures around the sites of the Israeli and American diplomatic missions in Cairo, the consulates of the two states in Alexandria, and the residences of the members of the two embassies, in order to avoid exposing them to acts of revenge for the Israeli incursion into Lebanon.

The Israeli Embassy issued instructions to the members of the diplomatic missions in Egypt to be cautious in their movements, fearing their exposure to attack.

Likewise, the American Embassy received directives from the U.S. State Department to limit the movements of the members of the embassy in the streets and to take intensely watchful measures to safeguard the embassy site after the latest threats of the extremist groups to launch an attack of revengeful actions against American interests in the region.

Minister: School Brainwashing Source of Extremism

93LD0022C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Jul 93 p 5

[Article by Aminah Khayri]

[Text] London—Egyptian Education Minister Husayn Kamal Baha'al-Din has stressed the existence of a "strong connection between the education system and terrorism." He said that violence and religious extremism are "a logical result of an educational system that facilitates a gradual approach to the minds of children and makes them easy prey to brainwashing."

In a meeting with members of the Egyptian emigre community at the Egyptian Cultural Office in London the day before yesterday, Baha'al-Din said that the education system has been a primary target through which terrorists have infiltrated. He added, "The plan has been around for years. It was not created yesterday. Unfortunately, it has not been opposed as it should be."

He said that this has resulted in the extremists' successful infiltration into colleges of education. "They [the colleges] are graduating teachers who have been recruited

into these extremist groups. They teach the children subjects that are not part of the established curricula. They are imposing strange models of behavior and activities which the state has never approved and will never approve." The minister cited examples involving teachers who required girls six and seven years old to wear veils. "Whoever does not wear a veil is subject to being hit and expelled. They are also circulating cassette tapes that disseminate their extremist ideas. Some of them have prohibited the salute to the flag in the morning and the singing of the national anthem."

Regarding confrontation of this problem, he said, "Article 18 of the Egyptian Constitution stipulates that the state shall supervise all types of education. Pursuant to that, the ministry has begun to counteract actions intended to sabotage the minds of children. The ministry is currently imposing strict rules that exclude anyone who forcibly introduces ideas having no bearing on education in the schools."

Responding to a question about what really happened at the al-Khanikah Girls Secondary School, the minister said that he looked into the matter himself. He verified that a female teacher in the school twice forced two Christian students to listen to two cassette tapes entitled, "Forgiveness of Sins" and "Punishment of the Grave." Both tapes contain discussions on transcendental matters, which have no relation to the noble Koran, and a clear insult to Jesus and Christians.

The minister explained the circumstances in which decisions were made to transfer the said teacher to a remote area, deduct a portion of the wages of several teachers and the supervisor of the school, and expel four students. He said that several local leaders expressed their displeasure with these decisions. Then, the transferred teacher visited him and clarified that she has five children, and he decided to remove her from education. He said that he decided to return the four students to the school after ascertaining that they had perceived their error.

The minister said that, following this incident, "Large quantities of printed books were infiltrated and distributed for free. These books contain accusations that the Education Ministry and the education minister had abbreviated the established curriculum dealing with the Prophet's military expeditions, the Islamic conquests, and the victories of Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi. The accusation went so far as to say that this deletion was made on the basis of advice from Jewish and American experts." The minister added that all of these accusations are invalid. "The history books specified for different grades were presented to a group of senior clerics for comparison. These clerics themselves ascertained that Islamic history has not been subjected to any deletion or abbreviation."

Al-Azhar Deputy on Islam, Extremism

93LD0022A Cairo 'AQIDATI in Arabic 15 Jun 93 p 4

[Interview with Shaykh Sayyid Sa'ud, the deputy of al-Azhar, by Basyuni al-Hulwani, Musa Hal, and Jamal Salim; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] When we sat down with Shaykh Sayyid Sa'ud to interview him, we faced the problem of where to begin, for he holds numerous responsibilities. He is the deputy of al-Azhar, i.e., the second man in charge of all al-Azhar faculties after the great imam; the secretary general of the Islamic Research Academy; and the head of the Central Administration of al-Azhar Institutes. All of these are al-Azhar institutions that are topics of discussions. Some of them wage battles with authors, litterateurs, and those who claim to be intellectuals.

However, his simplicity, open-mindedness, and receptivity to our questions—or, more correctly, our charges—facilitated our task. Our interview with him was candid and bold.

[AQIDATI] Last week, the great author Najib Mahfuz was quoted in 'AQIDATI as saying that he is willing to debate the al-Azhar ulema regarding his novel, *Children of Our Quarter*, which has provoked much debate. He also said that he would be willing to repent and retreat from what he said in the novel if they persuade him of their opinion. How willing are you to engage in such a debate with him?

[Sa'ud] I invite Najib Mahfuz to come to al-Azhar to discuss our differences regarding that novel. I say to our great writer Najib Mahfuz that al-Azhar has never closed its door in anyone's face. Al-Azhar is like a mosque, in that it would be inappropriate for the ulema of al-Azhar to close the door in the face of anyone who approaches it, regardless of the reason. I personally welcome him at any time to debate the Muslim scholars in al-Azhar's courtyard, so that he can become familiar with and respond to their opinions regarding *Children of Our Quarter* and [provide] his proofs, to put an end to this conflict in the courtyard of al-Azhar. Al-Azhar does not ban an idea as long as it does not transgress the creed.

Najib Mahfuz has written more than 50 books. Have any of them been impounded other than *Children of Our Quarter*, which is said to contain things and ideas which must be changed and corrected. Al-Azhar is most willing to discuss them with him.

Freedom of Thought

[AQIDATI] You are the secretary general of the Islamic Research Academy. A battle is now being waged between the academy and authors who believe that the academy engages in censorship and bans thought and expression. At the same time, another group is accusing the academy of being in suspended animation and removed from experiencing society's problems. What is your response to these two groups?

[Sa'ud] First, the academy does not ban ideas. Nor does it oppose an opinion unless it conflicts with the core of the Islamic creed or transgresses a religious principle. This is not only a duty of the academy, but also the duty of every Muslim, regardless of whether he is a member of the academy. When the identity and principles of the Islamic creed are transgressed, each Muslim must oppose this deviation to the extent possible. Therefore, we like good ideas which enrich thought, Islam, and Islamic culture, but which do not transgress the creed or its existence. Second, we do not object to a book or novel unless it is sent to us by its owner with a request for our opinion on it. When we receive a book, we refer it to specialists who study it from an Islamic viewpoint. If the book is suitable, we permit its publication. If it transgresses the creed, we tell the author which expressions are not permitted and which statements should not be made because they transgress the creed. Moreover, al-Azhar has never been authorized to ban an idea. Rather, we take legal measures against any offensive book. We then leave the decision to the court, which either orders that the book be blocked or permits its publication. However, we ban a book immediately if it distorts the Koran or the Sunnah of God's Prophet. It is only in this instance that we do not refer the matter to the court. I have the authority as the secretary of the Islamic Research Academy to impound a distorted copy of the Koran or a distorted, incorrect prophetic tradition. As for ordinary books, I submit them to someone whose academic competence I trust. After he submits a report to me, I send it to the judicial agencies. These agencies render a final judgement on whether to allow or block publication of the book.

As to my response to the second part of the question, members of the academy have principles, opinions, and morals. Must these members descend to cheap places which are inappropriate for them as ulema? It is neither their job nor their duty to do so. Their job is to express a correct Islamic opinion regarding what is submitted to them. In this way, they participate in life by permitting an idea that is compatible with Islam. If some say that the people do not perceive the effort made by the academy and its ulema, must the ulema sit in al-'Ataba Market, so that the people can be aware of them?

Al-Azhar Means Moderation

[AQIDATI] Some have charged that the education provided at al-Azhar is a cause of extremism. Others charge that this education is far from religion, because it offers dual education. Thus, secularists accuse it of being a cause of extremism, because it feeds extremist ideas, and Islamists accuse it of being far from religion, because it offers dual education, is distant from the society's problems, and encumbers students with irrelevant curricula. What is your response to these charges made by secularists and Islamists?

[Sa'ud] First, such talk is incorrect. No one from al-Azhar's colleges and institutes is among those who have been arrested for terrorism. Second, whoever studies at

al-Azhar receives a correct, tolerant, natural, and religious education that advocates moderation. Consequently, an al-Azhar student cannot call for extremism or immoderation in religion. Rather, he calls for natural moderation, which every Muslim must practice.

Therefore, all of the so-called Islamist groups which carry out acts of terrorism can in no way be affiliated with al-Azhar students. This question was settled some time ago, because the education received by an al-Azhar student opposes extremism and immoderate ideas. As for my response to the second part of your question, let me emphasize that this accusation was made before 1961. However, now, after we adopted the principle that anything new needs to be tested with the implementation of Law No. 103 of 1961, we created a transitional period which lasted from 1961 until 1969. In this period, religious and Arabic curricula were refined. The filling and the redundancy were removed from these curricula. Thus, students in al-Azhar institutions now study Islamic law and Arabic subjects, which are absolutely indispensable, to become well versed in the Islamic sciences. They also study the cultural subjects studied by their counterparts in the Education Ministry to qualify them for admission to the modern colleges that have been established at al-Azhar. The Administration of al-Azhar Institutes later went even further. The committees met once again in 1973-1974, in the ministry of Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Isa, who gave instructions that our role not be limited to developing the religious and Arabic sciences, but should also extend to developing the cultural sciences. Al-Azhar was exemplary in its diversification of the al-Azhar education to include literature, science, and mathematics. Al-Azhar's logic in this regard is that a student admitted to the Engineering College does not need to study chemistry and biology as intensively as a student who specializes in these areas in the Sciences Department. Likewise, a student admitted to School of Medicine does not need to study the multiple branches of mathematics intensively. Our goal in this is to relieve the student of what he does not need. Then, the Education Ministry moved toward diversification based on our method, although it retreated from diversification last year. All of these claims are false. Students now study to become qualified for admission to cultural and religious colleges. They take the same subjects that they took before this development in education. The only new area for students is foreign language study. We had an especially strong need for foreign language study, because the student now goes to countries where Arabic is not spoken and must be proficient in a foreign language, so that he can do efficiently and reliably what he must do. [passage omitted]

Prominent Cleric on Islam, Politics

93LD0022B Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 12 Jul 93 p 2

[Interview with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid Kishk by Salim 'Azzuz; place and date not given]

[Text] Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid Kishk is a man worthy of respect. He is among the few ulema who transmit God's messages and fear only God. He is also among the missionaries who have not purchased God's verses inexpensively. He has been tortured and arrested. He has endured what no human has endured, because he says my lord is God. Shaykh Kishk has gained considerable success through his eloquence and ability to speak in a language understood by the common person. He is said to be the star of Islamic missionary work in Egypt.

We conducted the following interview with him:

['Azzuz] Although Islam calls for unity and eschews fractionalization, we nonetheless note that the Islamic groups have multiplied and become fractionalized. What is your eminence's opinion regarding the multiplicity of Islamic groups? Why have they multiplied? Why have they become divided? Why are they fighting each other?

[Kishk] The multiplicity of groups could be either a healthy or unhealthy phenomenon. It is healthy if they cooperate and agree that what has preceded has paved the way for what succeeds, and that the former perfects the latter. That is clear.

There is a group called the Transmission Society. Its mission is to bring the people together and lead them to mosques. It mobilizes. The Society of Islamic Law teaches the people prayer and the foundations of religious observances. Another society, which is Sufi, teaches morals. The Ansar al-Sunnah Society teaches the people tenets and what they relate to. The Jihad Group shows the people that there are types of holy wars, including the holy war of the self, the holy war of missionary work, the holy war of the tongue, and the holy war against enemies in the service of God, the sublime and the exalted. The Muslim Brotherhood group undertakes education in its various aspects. The prophet clearly and correctly stipulated education, when he said, "I have been sent to perfect noble characteristics."

If such cooperation exists between these groups, they are brought together by a wire melting with the electricity of life, so that they are complimentary and cooperate. If what precedes cooperates with what succeeds, the former paves the way for the latter, and the latter perfects the former. In this case, the multiplicity of these groups is a healthy phenomenon that produces good, ripe fruit through which God becomes manifest to the nation and humanity.

If they disagree and engage in internecine fighting and tendentious tale-bearing, and fractionalization is incited covertly, by God that is a mortal blow, which will cause the enemy to gloat and the friend to be sad.

The secret of this conflict that crushes and divides them and transforms them into fraternal enemies can be attributed to a lack of leadership. Leadership of missionary work is like the head of the body. Can there rightfully be a body without a head?!

The action of one man with respect to a thousand men is stronger and more rightly guided than the statement of a thousand men with respect to one man! And if a tiger leads a thousand ostriches in the heart of a thousand tigers, an ostrich leads a thousand tigers!

I have in the past recommended, in order for us to reunify and join forces, that we—shayks, leaders, guides, or officials of each group—come together to form a council comprising men regarded as examples. We would call it the "Council of the Call to God." To prevent a dispute at the very outset, the oldest member of the council would be its chairman. The members of the council would have no aspirations or desire to lead, because age would determine leadership. The other members of this council would be the other leaders of groups.

Consultations, disputes, judgments, and opinions will no doubt occur. In that event, let us use successful, beneficial medicine, which is none other than the golden rule, which says, "Let us act on what we agree, and let us together rectify what we differ on." And, because of love, no difference of opinion shall undermine a cause!

I maintain that there is very much on which we agree. Let us work to stand on common ground. Let us promote the greatest common denominator uniting our factions and backing. "And fall into no disputes lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for God is with those who patiently persevere" [Koran, 8:46]. That on which we differ is minor and rectifiable. It requires us to deny ourselves, for our only goal is God. "Say: Verily, my Lord hath guided me to a way that is straight—a religion of right—the path (trode) by Abraham the true in faith, and he (certainly) joined not God's with God" [Koran, 6:161]. "Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for God, the cherisher of the worlds" [Koran, 6:162]. "No partner hath he: This am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to his will" [Koran, 6:163]. Let us forget our intentions and ambitions. Let us end our aspirations. Then, after that, let us work. "There is no God but God" is an unbreakable oath. If God discerns our good intention, He will bring us together! This is our situation. He has taken us on the straight path!

Thus, groups may differ or agree. If they agree, it is a healthy phenomenon, and the ship will proceed in moderate weather. If they differ, the ship will incline, and its contents will be inundated; fate will have transpired, sorrow will remain, and tomorrow will come despite today!

[Azzuz] What precludes implementation of your recommendation to unify these groups?

[Kishk] By God, the reasons are well known, but that which is befitting is unknown!

[Azzuz] But I do not know the reasons!

[Kishk] It might be fear, it might be the pursuit of status or standing and so on.

[Azzuz] You were among the propagandists who most ardently supported the Islamic revolution in Iran. It is said that the Iranian Government has named a major street in Tehran after you. This has prompted some to accuse you of becoming a Shiite. What do you say?

[Kishk] (Interrupting) By God, whoever thinks this has made a mistake. I have always supported only the truth which pleases God. When I delivered a sermon in which I attacked Iraq against Iran, I was not, and shall continue not to be, inclined toward Iraq or a follower of Iran. Rather, [I did so] as a Muslim commanded by God, the exalted and sublime, to observe neutrality. He said, "O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that ye do" [Koran, 4:135].

My only aim was to establish who initiated the aggression. Iraq initiated it. The United Nations supported this remark a few months ago! I wanted to establish who the aggressor was, because Islam does not allow aggression. "But do not transgress limits; for God loveth not transgressors." [Koran, 2:190]. The intent of my statement was that Iraq was the attacker and Iran was the attacked. We want to be united, not divided. We want to be strong, not weak. We want to repel the enemy's plot and support the friend, making peace with those who make peace with us and treating as an enemy those who treat us as an enemy.

Secularism

[Azzuz] What is your opinion regarding secularism, the separation between religious currency and political currency, and the exclusion of clerics from government?

[Kishk] Whoever made this remark never had Islam in mind, because the Muslim must always keep in mind the utterance of God, the exalted, "Judge between them by what God hath revealed" [Koran, 5:48]. Whoever made this statement accuses the orthodox caliphs, for they were rulers [who integrated religion and statecraft]. Whoever maintains that government does not enter into Islam, and whoever maintains that there is no politics in religion and no religion in politics, accuses the orthodox caliphs of counterfeiting Islamic currency!

Seeking Economic Stability

Millions Set for Oil, Energy Investments

93AF0756A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Jun 93 p 13

[Unattributed article: "Egypt Allocates 273 Million Pounds to Finance Oil Investments"]

[Text] The Egyptian oil minister, Dr. Hamdi al-Banbi, said that his government had allocated 273 million Egyptian pounds to finance programs to implement oil investment projects for the new fiscal year. During the new year that begins in early July 1993, the plan is aimed at fulfilling the butagas and natural gas requirements of citizens and of the production and services sector.

On 16 June, the minister met with the head of the Petrogas Company, Engineer Ahmad Khalaf, and other company experts to discuss the company's implementation program. Engineer Ahmad Khalaf explained that the program included feeding natural gas to 65,000 new housing units, and supplying the needs of 1,200 commercial installations in various quarters and districts of greater Cairo. In addition, it will also supply the requirements of factories and workshops in the industrial parks of Tenth of Ramadan City and Kafr al-Duwar. The sum of 196 million pounds has been allocated to carry out these projects.

Khalaf said that implementing the natural gas projects in the next fiscal year would increase the number of participants to 510,000, with a consumption of 110 million cubic meters, valued at \$20 million.

The head of Petrogas estimated the volume of natural gas that is to be used for industrial purposes and to operate electricity generating stations during the next fiscal year at 10.76 billion cubic meters. With regard to supplying butagas, Khalaf said that proposed amounts would increase to 1.075 million tons compared to 960,000 tons during the 92-93 fiscal year. This would be a 12 percent increase, in order to meet increased requirements for butagas, especially in outlying regions.

In this regard, Khalaf pointed out that new bottling units would be operated and existing units enlarged, in Tanta, al-Minufiyah, Port Sa'id, Damietta, al-'Arish, Kafr al-Dawar, and al-Minya. The company will also take into account the quality of production and improved means of testing cylinders.

Khalaf said that the program to implement supplying butagas, whose investment amounts to 76 million pounds, includes increasing outlets by 120 new centers throughout the region in order to distribute butagas cylinders. The total number of outlets would then be 635. Workshops will be established to repair and maintain cylinders in al-Qitamiyah and al-Makis in Alexandria, in order to renew cylinders in circulation, estimated at approximately 8 million cylinders.

Misr Bank Establishes New Investment Fund

93AF0756B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Aug 93 p 13

Article by Yusuf Shakir: "Misr Bank Establishes Investment Fund With 500 Million Pound Capital"]

[Text] The chairman of the Egyptian Financial Markets Board, Dr. Muhammad Hasan Fajj-al-Nur, denied that

Egyptian banks are setting up processes to sell shares of public business sector companies, offered by the government outside of the stock market. He explained that what had happened with regard to the Egyptian Chemical Company was a subscription to increase capital, which is controlled by the market of issue. The stock market had nothing to do with it, since it is the circulation market.

At a press conference held on 3 August, Dr. Fajj-al-Nur said that since the beginning of August a new system has been followed by the Egyptian Financial Market Board. This system requires applying the "international division" when dividing companies into sectors in the stock market, full daily and continuous disclosure regarding information about stock market activities, restricting movement of shares to once [a day] whether buying or selling, and nullifying the old system that allowed one time for selling and another for buying. He pointed out that the record daily number of transactions in the stock market was similar to rates recorded in international financial institutions. He has also formed a committee, chaired by a university professor, to choose the standard measurement from a group of differing rate models, in order to select the most appropriate for the Egyptian market for the near future.

Dr. Fajj-al-Nur announced that the link between the Cairo and Alexandria stock markets would be completed this month, after the completion of installing equipment, computer screens, writing the programs, choosing the network, and feeding it to the national data network. He explained that, in light of connecting the two stock markets, a consolidated booklet would be published containing all their operations, in addition to a monthly publication containing all operations and statistics for the securities market that compares them with statistics for the previous month, as well as a list of companies registered in the stock market and companies outside of it.

Dr. Fajj-al-Nur stated that circulation within the Egyptian securities market for the first half of 1993 was moderate and then declined. However, there were no companies closed or newly registered during that period. He explained that the board approved the establishment of six securities companies. Thirteen were restrained, in order to make their situations compatible with the new financial market, by causing the delay period set by the board to elapse next October.

Dr. Fajj-al-Nur announced that Egyptian banks and insurance companies have begun to direct the sale of monetary portfolios that they own in order to create investment funds, and that Misr Bank has obtained approval in principle from the board to establish an investment fund, capitalized at 500 million pounds. Measures to establish this fund are being completed.

Moreover, two other investment funds, with joint Egyptian-Arab participation, have been created outside Egypt

to buy securities in New York and London. The capitalization is \$100 million, with each fund capitalized at \$50 million.

Dr. Fajj-al-Nur added that, in the near future, the stock market will see the offer of thousands of shares from public business sector companies, which the government intends to sell within the context of expanding the private ownership base. The most prominent of these companies are Masrub Carbonated Water, and the shares owned by the public business sector in two companies—Suez Cement Company and Alexandria Tire Company.

Dr. Hassan expressed his complete rejection of measures for direct sale in the privatization processes, explaining that the Egyptian securities market was able to absorb the offered shares. He said that direct sale "reduces the opportunity for legitimate Egyptian participation in the national economy."

Sugar Price Increases Due to Public, Private Sector

93AF0756C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Jun 93 p 13

Article by Yusuf Shakir: "Clash of Egyptian Public, Private Sectors Reflected in Increased Sugar Tariffs"]

[Text] The Egyptian Businessmen's Association has opposed the government's decision to increase customs duties on imported sugar from 2 percent to 20 percent. The association described this as a matter that would negatively affect the manufacture of products that incorporate sugar as one of the ingredients, such as alcohol, chipboard, paper pulp, perfume, and yeast.

In a memorandum prepared for this purpose, the businessmen's association said that this decision would lead to a monopoly by the Refining and Industrial Sugar Company and an increase of costs, which have risen from 1,050 Egyptian pounds to 1,255 pounds per ton, on the pretext of rising costs of obtaining sugar cane from farmers. It was noted that the increase in obtaining sugar cane, according to the memorandum, caused an increase in sugar manufacturing costs of only 56 pounds. The note went on to say that the percentage of increase from 2 to 20 percent was out of line with changes in prices on world stock exchanges, and that this would result in a considerable rise, which would negatively affect industries that use sugar as a basic component.

The note called for reconsidering the change in the customs rate, along with studying other methods to protect the sugar refining company, such as establishing a budget fund for sugar imported from abroad, which totals some 600,000 tons. That could be done by setting a flat rate per ton as a subsidy for growing the sugar cane that is supplied to the sugar company. The note proposed that the rate be a flat 75 pounds, which would raise 45 million pounds to cover the increased production costs.

On the other hand, the sugar refining company warned against taking the growing of sugar cane out of governmental control by freeing its prices, especially in light of the expected strong competition after the doors are opened wide to importing. The company explained that the continual decline in world sugar prices was not guaranteed and that, if the local industry was not protected and was left to collapse under the pressure of permissible imports, there could be years of rising imported sugar costs.

The sugar refining company's note mentioned that the increase of customs fees was necessary to achieve a price balance between local sugar and its imported counterpart, to ensure that the national sugar industry could achieve a suitable profit for the approximately 5 billion pounds invested in it, and to participate in attracting new investments of more than 1.65 billion pounds to build five new sugar production plants. Furthermore, importation has now been opened up without regulations to ensure that the profits of sugar cane cultivation will be competitive with or equal to the profitability of other agricultural crops, in the event the market becomes limited. Accordingly, the price of importing one ton should be raised from 66 to 92 pounds, or else farmers will stop growing sugar cane in favor of other more profitable crops. This will threaten closure of sugar plants, with all that represents in terms of weakening the Egyptian economy by the loss of tens of thousands of job opportunities and the loss of investments of more than 3 billion pounds. Therefore, it will be necessary to accept world prices for supplies of sugar cane and to produce sugar at a price that costs more than world prices, which the memorandum expects to continue to drop for a long time.

In the memorandum, the sugar refining company went on to say that increasing customs duties is not enough. Specific amounts of imported sugar must be fixed for specific periods of time, along with rejecting compensatory fees on the value of imported white sugar by standing firm against foreign sources flooding the Egyptian market and offering a financial subsidy for the supply of sugar. The price of a ton of imported sugar is \$340, while its actual cost is up to \$700. The purpose of that is to achieve flood the market, as cited in the GATT Treaty, to which sugar-exporting countries resort in order to operate their production plants at full capacity and continue beet cultivation on their lands. In its memorandum, the company asked the government for approval to refine all the local market's needs, currently amounting to 600,000 tons of raw sugar, so as to refine this amount in its sugar plants to enhance the economics of operation and exploit available capacities. In addition, a surplus over imported sugar of \$60 million could be achieved, lessening the balance of payments' burden. It would also reorganize the importation process, which would result in no conflicts between the local sugar production program and importing programs.

The note pointed out that there is no room to establish new sugar cane production plants, in view of the limited

agricultural land suitable for cane cultivation and the limited irrigation water within the framework of crop composition for Egyptian agricultural lands, which are provided for grains and other agricultural crops. It is possible to operate the five existing plants at the top possible capacity of 940,000 annually by increasing the sugar cane crop, through the use of new high-tech production methods and levelling the land by lasers.

The note explained the possibility of increasing production by producing sugar from molasses. In this regard, Egypt has a huge project to produce 350,000 tons, of which 200,000 tons will be allocated for the alcohol, paper pith, and organic solubles industries, with the remaining 150,000 tons to be exported.

The memo calculated Egypt's sugar production at approximately 1,264,000 tons per year, from sugar cane, beets, and sorghum, with consumption totalling 1,782,000 tons.

The note anticipated that the cost of producing a ton of white sugar would continue to rise. This year, the cost will be 1,195 pounds, rising to 1,406 pounds next year. In 1995, the cost is estimated to be 1,551 pounds, while it would be 1,682 pounds in 1996, and more than 1,871 pounds in 1997. Meanwhile, the price of an imported ton will be \$190 by the latter part of this year, \$230 next year, \$265 in 1995, \$280 in 1996, and \$315 in 1997. At the same time, the actual cost per ton will be twice those amounts. This will require the government to take decisive actions to protect the national sugar industry from the European policy of flooding the market, if importation is opened up without regulation.

More Economic Projects Foreseen

Cairo-Moscow Airline To Be Resumed

93AF0742A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
11 Jul 93 p 11

[Article by 'Adil Mustafa]

[Text] Cairo—After a suspension that has lasted 20 years, the Egypt Airlines Company and Russian Airlines have agreed in principle to resume the Egyptian company's flights between Cairo and Moscow. Under the agreement, Egypt Airlines will fly weekly from Cairo to Moscow via Budapest.

Air travel between Egypt and the former Soviet Union was suspended about 20 years ago following a change in Egypt's relations with Russia during al-Sadat's rule. Recently, there have been active bilateral talks to reinstate the Egyptian route after an increase in the number of Russian tourists traveling to Egypt on the Russian airlines (Aeroflot), which has continued to operate during the past 20 years and currently makes three trips weekly between Moscow and Cairo.

Prime Minister Interferes To Save 2 Construction Companies

93AF0742B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
11 Jul 93 p 12

[Article by Ahmad Gharib]

[Text] Cairo—'Atif Sidqi, Egypt's prime minister and minister of the public business sector, has decided to intervene to salvage contracting and construction companies from collapse, bankruptcy, and inactivity to prevent thousands of workers and engineers working in this field from being laid off.

The prime minister tasked the Technical Office of the Public Business Sector Ministry and its technical advisor, Munir Hamdi, to conduct a quick study of the debt problems of 26 contracting and construction companies in order to find a way for the government to pay the 2 billion Egyptian pounds owed to these companies by governmental agencies for work completed years ago but not paid for. The companies' inability to collect these sums has led them to overdraw from commercial banks to remain solvent. The total amount drawn over the years is 1.8 billion pounds. These companies are paying 900 million pounds in interest, but they cannot collect interest on the 2 billion pounds owed them by the government. Several companies are paying the banks the equivalent of 23 million pounds per month in installments, debt, and interest. These sums exceed the value of the works, which requires the government to intervene rapidly to save these companies.

In another development, Muhammad Mahmud 'Ali Hasan, chairman of the Construction and Building Holding Company, said that the valuation of the companies is continuing. Eighteen companies have been appraised. The results of these appraisals have been sent to the Technical Office in the Public Business Sector Ministry to be studied in preparation for restructuring these companies and adjusting their economic paths. This will be followed by the expansion of the ownership base of these companies through the private sector's and workers' acquisition of some of their shares.

Three Hundred Million Dollars for Sugar Company

93AF0742C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
8 Jul 93 p 11

[Article by Khalid Jawdah]

[Text] Cairo—The Egyptian Agriculture Ministry has completed feasibility studies on the construction of a new plant to produce beet sugar on a 500-feddan area in the city of Mutubis in the governorate of Kafr al-Shaykh (in the delta region) at a total cost of \$300 million. Of this amount, \$100 million will be a grant from the Italian Government in the form of prefabricated facilities, machinery, and equipment. The Egyptian Government is providing the balance, \$200 million, to establish the

plant. A number of parties will participate in the project, including Egyptian insurance and sugar companies, according to 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Badri, an Egyptian parliament representative of the district of Fawah and Mutubis.

He said that the new plant will aim to absorb the entire sugar beet crop in Kafr al-Shaykh and neighboring governorate and provide a large quantity of beet sugar. The new plant's output capacity will be 300,000 tons per year compared to the old plant's output of only 60,000 tons.

The project, to be completed in 1997, will provide about 2,500 new jobs.

Egypt's total sugar output reportedly covers about 65 percent of domestic consumption. This ratio is expected to improve after the new factory comes on line. There is reportedly no possibility that new plants will be built for producing sugar from sugar cane, because of the limited farm land suited to sugar cane cultivation and the fact that irrigation water is reserved for grains and other crops. A memorandum prepared recently by the Egyptian Refinement and Sugar Company says that the five existing plants can be made to operate at their full capacity, 940,000 tons per year, by substantially increasing the sugar cane yield through the use of a new, high output additive.

Sugar production operations in Egypt are moving toward the extraction of sugar from beets and molasses for the most part. Egypt has a large project to produce sugar from molasses with a capacity for 350,000 tons per year. Of this amount, 200,000 tons are channeled to the alcohol, paper pulp, and organic solvents industries. The remaining 150,000 tons are exported. About 5 billion pounds have been invested in Egypt's sugar industry sector, which has helped attract more than 1.650 billion pounds in new investments.

Egypt's sugar industry is facing a critical situation because of the government's decision to open the door to imports. Industry leaders fear that European firms will flood the Egyptian market with sugar.

Sugar industry leaders have called for the establishment of criteria and controls to prevent flooding and to protect the domestic industry from collapsing under the pressure of imports.

GATT Said To Threaten Domestic Shipping

93AF0736A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Jul 93 p 3

[Text] Cairo—Due to the GATT organization's movement toward liberalizing services, Egypt's maritime transport industry is facing a critical situation that threatens it with the loss of 3 billion Egyptian pounds in annual profit.

The chairman of the Maritime Transport Holding Company in Egypt, Muhammad 'Adli 'Abd-al-Mu'ti, told

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the negotiations currently being conducted in GATT aim to formulate a multilateral agreement which eliminates existing trade restrictions between all countries belonging to GATT and increases the developing countries' share of business in international services.

He said that the initial draft agreement that was reached is an international, multilateral agreement covering all international, tradeable services in different sectors, including the maritime transport sector.

'Abd-al-Mu'ti said that implementation of this agreement will directly affect international transit activity and the maritime services provided by the Egyptian maritime transport sector in the Suez Canal, a most important water passage whose geographical location between East and West attracts international transit movement.

He said that the services provided to ships and goods are important, basic activities essential to optimizing maritime transport activity, which serves the state's foreign trade in general. It is thus appropriate and important to examine these services in a way that is commensurate with their economic impact.

He said that services provided by Egypt's maritime transport sector are limited to loading and unloading, which includes storage, the provisioning and repair of ships, the fastening of goods, shipping agency activity, and the protection of goods during loading, unloading, and transport to warehouses for deposition. The fewer defects in the goods, the lower the insurance rate is for handled goods. International and domestic insurance companies monitor the damage incurred by goods at each port and establish insurance rates applicable to goods loaded or unloaded according to each port's rating.

'Abd-al-Mu'ti added that loading/unloading activity, whose foreign and domestic currency financing needs are provided by the state, is divided into two types. The first is traditional loading and unloading activity. It is performed by United Arab Loading and Unloading Company, Bur Sa'id Container and Goods Handling Company, Damietta Container Handling Company, Suez Automated Loading and Unloading Company, General Silos Company, and the companies that handle unloading at anchor, which are subordinate to the public business sector.

The other type of activity is container handling. It is performed by Alexandria Container Handling Company, Bur Sa'id Container Handling Company, and Damietta Container Handling Company. He said that three stations specializing in container handling have been established and are managed by these three companies. Alexandria Company operates at the Alexandria station, with a capacity for 12,000 containers per year, at the Port of Alexandria and al-Dakhilah. Bur Sa'id Container Handling Company operates the Port Sa'id station. The maximum capacity of the station's first stage is 140,000 containers. This will increase to 200,000 containers per

year when the second stage is completed. The Damietta Container Handling Company operates at the Port of Damietta. The capacity of its station is. [as published]

He said that the agencies' activity does not require large amounts of capital, because it depends primarily on human expertise, good means of communication, and sufficient service requirements to receive foreign boats at ports and to service their crews by arranging suitable transit resources with international and domestic communications systems. The agencies offer all of these resources as well as long experience with foreign countries. He said that these agencies, in the framework of the maritime transport sector policy, have generated profits that have permitted the formation of major financial resources. These resources have enabled the companies to self-finance investments in maritime transport without having to request state allocations for such investments. For example, Egyptian Maritime Transport Company was established with capital of \$58.8 million, and National Shipping was established with capital of \$35 million; container handling stations were established, including Alexandria Container Handling Company with \$20.5 million in capital, Bur Sa'id Container Handling Company with 24 million pounds in capital, and Damietta Container Handling Company with 40 million pounds in capital.

'Abd-al-Mu'ti said that the Egyptian maritime transport sector opposed the liberalization of services when the multilateral discussions began on the sectoral level. Its opposition was based on its desire to avoid unequal competition with advanced countries, to maintain the financial return to the state that the sector has realized, and to protect the state's enormous investment in developing the maritime sector. Many developing countries shared this position during the initial stages of the negotiations. Until September 1992, the United States also opposed the inclusion of the maritime transport sector in the agreement. After that time, it began to promote the liberalization of one area: allowing the presence of organizations of the ship classification organizations in the U.S. market. The United States thus clearly expressed its acceptance of the inclusion of this activity among the activities covered by the agreement. 'Abd-al-Mu'ti said that, after studying the draft agreement to ascertain the extent to which it serves Egypt's economic and national interests, it became clear that one area would become open primarily to foreigners: activity involving the establishment of companies to which ownership of ships carrying passengers and goods under the Egyptian flag would be transferred. This is in addition to activities that the Egyptian public business sector or private sector cannot undertake because of their high capital cost and technical unfeasibility. Foreign nationals would be allowed to engage in these areas, which would entail establishing companies under the Investments Law to demolish [taksir] ships or repair containers in Egyptian ports. [sentence as published]

'Abd-al-Mu'ti recommended that the following maritime transport activities be liberalized:

The establishment, according to the Investment Law, of companies that would own ships for the transport of passengers and goods, provided that the foreign component of their crews does not exceed 5 percent, and provided that the wages of that component do not exceed 10 percent of total wages. This, and compliance with all laws and decrees regulating this activity applicable in the state, also applies to a ship which hoists the Egyptian flag abroad for a single trip to the nearest Egyptian port.

The second area of liberalization recommended by 'Abd-al-Mu'ti is the establishment of companies for the repair of containers at Egyptian ports under the Investments Law, provided that Egyptian manpower constitute at least 75 percent of the manpower in the project, that Egyptians constitute 50 percent of the management employees in the company, that a commitment be made to provide know-how for Egyptian factories to manufacture several spare parts needed in this field, and that a commitment be made to train Egyptian staff in the industry at a specialized center in a foreign port.

The activities which 'Abd-al-Mu'ti does not believe should be liberalized, or in which foreign nationals should not be allowed to engage in Egypt, include: maritime representation of foreign ships in Egyptian ports; the loading, unloading, and handling of goods in Egyptian ports and container stations; the provisioning of boats; public works; the reserving of empty spaces on boats for the transport of state goods; boat repair and construction; and towing and guidance services in ports.

In this way, the sector will have areas that can be liberalized, thereby permitting foreigners to operate in them pursuant to the conditions and limitations in the GATT agreement regarding entry into Egypt's market and the limitations of national treatment. He added that Egypt's maritime transport sector has requested that all bilateral or multilateral shipping agreements be exempted from the application of the draft agreement's article on most-favored nation treatment, which requires a state that is a party to the agreement to incorporate bilateral agreements. He said that this request ensures the validity of any bilateral agreement that Egypt signs with another country, without a third country benefitting from any advantage established by that bilateral agreement.

He said that most of these bilateral agreements stipulate the mutual sharing of the transport of goods between Egypt and the countries which sign agreements with it on the national fleets of both countries. Such a stipulation provides for the transport of a suitable volume of goods on ships belonging to the national fleet, which in turn supports and enables the development and modernization of the national fleet.

The director general of monitoring in the Maritime Transport Holding Company, 'Abd-al-Wahhab Jalal, said that certain services will be exempted from the application of the agreement for ten years. Given the limited scope of this period, he further stated, it is

necessary to study the requirements of the next period in order to become competitive with other countries in providing maritime transport services.

He said that this requires the restructuring of the public business sector, including the maritime transport sector. Each sector should be subjected separately to thorough studies dealing with privatization and the best method for applying market mechanisms to achieve fair competition domestically, and then with the developed countries.

'Abd-al-Wahhab Jalal called for the gradual liberalization of the domestic services sector so as to maintain stable markets, avoid the negative effects of world developments in maritime transport services, and at the same time keep pace with world developments in this industry. All of this requires investments.

He emphasized the need to study the schedule of states joining the GATT agreement regarding areas in which engagement is permitted pursuant to the conditions and limitations specified in their schedules, so that Egyptians can penetrate these markets and establish an Egyptian maritime presence in them.

IRAQ

Speaker of Assembly on New Constitution, Parties

93LA0158A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
14 Jul 93 pp 8-9

[Interview with Mr. Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the National Assembly, by ALIF BA' in Baghdad; date not given]

[Text] Our struggling nation is celebrating during these gracious days the silver jubilee of the 17-30 July great revolution, which the struggling leader president Saddam Husayn—may God bless and guard him—planned and led.

Since its early days, this miraculous revolution accomplished numerous achievements claimed by none else but it. It also sought to consolidate the national institutions within the framework of the vision, methodology, and ideology of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party. By so doing, the Revolution was aiming at bringing about new experiences that would be commensurate with Iraq's place in history. Probably, laying the foundation for democracy could be considered one of the tasks to which the Revolution gave priority; it continued to implement strong and balanced procedures until the National Assembly was established. The Assembly has witnessed decisive and important events happening to the Party, the Revolution and the Nation; here, reference is being made to the period of both Saddam's sacred and blessed battle and the fierce mother of battles.

ALIF BA' had a dialogue with Mr. Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the National Assembly around the prospects of parliamentary work in Iraq and the domestic, Arab,

and international role of the Assembly in confronting attempts to destroy all aspects of the gigantic revolutionary experiment. The speaker of the National Assembly started by talking about the democratic steps that the Revolution has taken since its beginning and which have culminated in the establishment of the National Assembly.

[Salih] One of the principle goals of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party that initiated the 17-30 July Revolution is freedom, and one of the pillars and means of achieving freedom is democracy. Since the early days of the success of the Revolution, the Party leadership decided to transform this goal into practical and operational procedures. It therefore started by giving the utmost opportunity to the people to establish trade unions and federations that represent them. It also furnished these unions and federations with all possible support so that they could exercise their national role and fulfill the aspirations of those they represent. At the same time, the Revolution leadership conducted discussions with the different political powers in the Arab arena and presented them with a formulation of a national action pact. The leadership's efforts culminated successfully with the establishment of the National Progressive Popular Front, a procedure which enabled all parties affiliated to the Front to exercise normal party activities openly. These parties could also express their opinions and views through the newspapers and magazines they published. In order to broaden the base of the people's contribution to the administration of state affairs, the Revolution undertook a characteristically popular step by establishing the People's Councils, which represent the residents of the regions and suburbs. These Councils contribute to various activities and communicate the people's demands and voices to the specialized concerned agencies. The Councils also present proposals and recommendations for the development of the regions, which contribute, together with those of the Party organizations and administrative departments, in solving the residents' problems. Since the early days, the Revolution leadership attended to a concern that had been worrying Iraqis and indeed had cost them much sacrifice—that of the Kurdish issue. Through a dialogue with the Kurds, the Revolution leadership, by issuing the 11 March 1970 Declaration, managed to reach a nationalistic solution that set up methods to deal with this chronic national problem. Following this, the law for autonomy was issued on 11 March 1974, as was agreed upon. This law delineated the region, defined the method to administer its affairs, and established for it a specialized administration. The law also enacted the establishment of a regional parliament that was given the name of the Legislative Assembly. All of these procedures were steps on the road to provide the circumstances and requirements for accomplishing democracy according to a civilized contemporary understanding. According to the law, elections for the legislative assembly were held in the late seventies. The National Assembly law was issued in 1980. Less than two months after its enactment, elections for the first National Assembly in Iraq were

held on 20 June 1980. Thus, the leadership of the Revolution had honored its promises to give the people freedom and allow them to put up the establishments that represented them, thus enabling them to contribute effectively to administering the state's affairs.

Other Steps

[ALIF BA'] Are there other steps on the road to democracy after the establishment of the National Assembly?

[Salih] In spite of the big steps along the road to democracy that the Revolution accomplished, it has not yet stopped. All through, the Revolution has been concerned with bringing new benefits to the people in all spheres, particularly in the political sphere, with which we are now dealing. Our proof of that lies in the fact that the Revolution leadership, represented by the Leader and President Saddam Husayn—may God preserve him—initiated and drafted a new constitution for the country that would be suitable for the stage and degree of development that has been achieved in Iraq. Besides, the draft of a new law for the parties has been prepared, approved, and is being implemented.

[ALIF BA'] With regards to this law, have any parties already applied for formation? When will the formal announcement be made?

[Salih] Parties affiliated with the National Progressive Front already exist, yet, they made certain changes in order to adapt to the new parties law. Meanwhile, we are awaiting the birth of new parties; yet, in my view, it will be a long time before any party submits its documents complete and well drafted.

[ALIF BA'] What about the press law?

[Salih] The draft of the press law has been prepared and discussed at different levels in order to be issued in its complete form and to cover the wide range of matters for which it is issued so that there would be no need to introduce changes or to amend its acts at a later date.

[ALIF BA'] Does that mean that the parties that have already met all conditions will not announce themselves or issue any publications until the concerned law has been issued?

[Salih] The delay in issuing the press law should not impair the parties' activities, as the law would not be an obstacle to them. This is because multi-partisanship has been originally recognized by the already approved parties law, which is presently applied. In fact, it is the right of any party to publish newspapers or magazines upon the approval of its formation. Besides, we have a press and publication law that guarantees to non-party personnel to publish their newspapers; there is no problem with regards to this issue.

[ALIF BA'] How do you view the future in light of multi-partisanship?

[Salih] Presently, the work of national parties is conducted in the framework of the Front and the Pact. However, in the coming period, it is possible that the Front Pact will be developed to include all the new parties and adapt to the new process and its requirements; or else, each party could function outside the framework of the United Front according to the party program, because the parties law puts no conditions for political activity except that of loyalty to the state. Therefore, the second scenario is the most probable, which means that parties would be formed with each party conducting its activities on its own according to its programs and goals.

New Dimension

[ALIF BA'] The second dimension of our dialogue with Mr. Salih was related to the function of the National Assembly and its popular, national, and international role with regards to confronting the conspiracies that aim at attacking the state's sovereignty and the achievements of our gigantic Revolution. The speaker of the National Assembly spoke to us about these functions saying:

[Salih]

- The Law defined the function of the National Assembly; it indicated that its principal function (being the legislative authority together with the Revolution command Council) was to legislate laws.
- Its second function is to control and follow up the activities of the executive authority and question it in case of any delinquency in its work.
- The Assembly's third function is to contribute to the development of the country and facilitate its smooth running through the proposals and opinions that it formulates and communicates to the concerned agencies—naturally by way of the Presidential Office. The National Assembly, characterized as being a people's institution, acquires additional functions, especially in such circumstances as those that the nation has passed through since the election of the first Assembly in 1980. Subsequently, during the last period, the Assembly acquired additional roles and functions on both the domestic and foreign fronts. On the domestic front, the Assembly contributed to people's mobilization, the consolidation of the domestic front, and helping people maintain a high spirit, especially during our just defensive war against Iran. This contribution continued even during the mother of battles period, when the Assembly persisted in helping lift the people's spirit and consolidating the domestic front, thus undertaking its role as a national institution.
- The National Assembly is one of the active national institutions on the Arab and international fronts. It has always attended meetings of both the Arab and international parliamentary unions and had an obvious role with regards to presenting Iraq's case to the peoples and parliaments of the world through its bilateral relations with those parliaments as well as

through communiques, information, and clarifications that the Assembly would send either to individual parliaments or to different parliamentary unions in the world. In addition, through the exchange of delegations and visits, the Assembly contributed to establishing a world opinion, especially in the area of recognizing the blessing, for Iraq's interest, of having Saddam.

In the present stage, different changes in the world have made it difficult—if not impossible—for all Iraqi institutions to perfectly perform their roles as they should. Truly, we attend conferences, present our views, and expose the reasons for the aggression of the unjust alliance against Iraq. Yet, the impact of the United States and its allies is powerful and strong on the world community. Thus, both the formal and informal world communities know the truth and sympathize with us—only secretly; they could not declare their views openly or transfer those views into operational procedures, because they fear the anger of the United States and her allies. However, this situation does not lead us to despair. World politics is absolutely unstable; in our turn, we are persistent in continuing our work to expose the intention and reasons for the aggression. We submit our witness, supported by facts and actualities; this will ultimately change stands towards Iraq, especially that of world opinion. World opinion will definitely be transferred into pressure on the different countries, so that these countries will acquire a fair and right stand.

[ALIF BA'] While referring to the National Assembly's valuable efforts, is it possible to formulate a form of people's diplomacy that would target peoples instead of formal fronts?

[Salih] We are making all possible efforts to achieve what you have just referred to, which is to develop a people's diplomacy that would support and cooperate with the official diplomacy. This effort is the responsibility of and is undertaken by the Party, the National Assembly, and different organizations, federations, and unions that have human concerns. All these organizations coordinate their work to achieve this goal.

[ALIF BA'] What tasks has the National Assembly undertaken in order to end the unjust blockade?

[Salih] We have a psychological rather than an operational role. The Assembly has no executive authority that would allow it to contribute directly to executive activities. However, this fact does not relieve the Assembly from playing a psychological role in support of executing plans at the nation's level, which could assist in ending the blockade when we succeed in developing our national production in such a way that we could provide that big portion of people's needs, which had to be imported.

Another role that the Assembly plays is that particularly played by the Arab and International Relations Committee. The Committee contacts world parliaments and peoples to explain to them that this blockade has neither

legal nor moral support and that it is in contradiction with human rights, as was stated in the International Declaration for Human Rights, which has been approved by the United Nations. By so doing, the Assembly aims at getting peoples in the world and their representatives to become convinced of the need to demand that the blockade imposed on Iraq be lifted. The Assembly has been persistent in playing and still continues to play this role.

[ALIF BA'] During the past period, there has been a lot of talk about the possibility of finding solutions that aim at lifting the blockade imposed on Iraq and its people. In view of the stubbornness portrayed by the United States, what are the chances for such possibilities?

[Salih] There is indeed stubbornness, especially on the part of the United States and some of its allies, particularly the traitors among the Arabs. Those traitors are still stubborn and persistent in their wish to hurt Iraq and the Iraqi people. However, as I have mentioned earlier, politics are neither rigid nor stable; there are numerous factors that contribute to changing the direction of politics, such as exposing different facets of these stands, such as their falsification, the nullification of their justification, reasons, and motivations and their injustice. Besides, it could be proved that it is futile to continue such a policy or orientation towards a certain country. In fact, changing the policy towards a certain country depends, not only on that country's foreign relations, but also on its domestic conditions. In Iraq's case, Iraq's foes monitor whether conditions and problems are aggravating or improving; whether the country's leadership has succeeded in finding solutions to problems arising from the aggressors' stands, thus succeeding in leading its people on the right path, helping them to bear difficulties for the longest period possible, and yielding to the desires of neither the aggressors nor the greedy. In our view, we believe that the expected change will certainly take place, yet, not quickly. We are therefore requested to continue the same policy we set up, make sure of its application and of the development of our methods according to each stage. This policy will deprive our enemies of the opportunity to be victorious over us. Subsequently, we will cause the enemies' plans to fail, and they will have to change their policies towards us.

Barzan al-Tikriti on Detachment From Materialism

93AE0525A Baghdad AL-JUMHIRIYAH in Arabic
7 Jun 93 p 8

[Article by Barzan al-Tikriti: "Money...and Noble Values"]

[Text] There are some who believe that money is everything in life. This makes them losers both in this life and in the next. Not only is money not everything, it is not even the most important thing in life. Particularly when one has enough to lead a decent life, provided the source of one's income is clear and legal. What I mean by

decent life is a reasonable and acceptable lifestyle which enables one to discharge one's obligations toward kin, friends, and the needy. Money is not everything in life because whoever believes this will find himself unable to buy everything, since there is many a thing that is not for sale. There is not a single person who has the power to buy faithful friends, nor can he buy love, loyalty, or integrity with money. Unfortunately, there are people in these vile times who value others for their money, because they rate them according to the size of their fortune. However, the ebb and flow of existence has taught us that this criteria is spurious, because there are countless millionaires who are worthless and, conversely, many poor, indigent people who are worth their weight in gold. The trivial and the self-centered love people to the degree that they can profit from them, and it escapes these egotistic simpletons that love is a hard currency at once hard to get and treasure. If you give them one thousand dinars, they will love you very much. If you only give one hundred, they will only love you, but if you give a mere five hundred, it is quite possible they will hate you. Profit is the only bond that links them to you, and their main concern, nay, their only concern is the money you give them. You are great and mighty as you shower them with gold, mighty for a day, the day they get their money from you. It is quite possible that they will turn their backs on you the very next day, since they have achieved their end, and they believe they can now further their interests more profitably with someone else. This kind of behavior is the norm for those creatures. Money does not satisfy the craving in their hearts even for a day, since those who only love money hate everything else. They have no other criteria but money as a measure of all things, because love of lucre is their master and their ultimate goal, not just a means to an end in life. Indeed, it is the paradise in which they dwell. Yet, in spite of all this, you will find that their lives are neither happy nor serene, if you analyze them closely. The fortunes they amass do not make them happy, because they live in a state of constant fear. This fear stems from the belief that all around them are thieves, and that whoever approaches them or attempts to befriend them is after their money. They are convinced that all of humanity is but one big band of cutthroats ready to strip them of their possessions. They believe everyone around them envies their fortune, and will try and despoil them, thus reducing them to paupers themselves. In my opinion, a moderate amount of money can make one happy, but a large fortune can make one miserable, particularly if one is unable to shed light on its origins or how it was built. As your fortune grows through unclear dealings, so does the number of your adversaries and enemies, and so does your unhappiness. In addition to the points already mentioned, too large a fortune makes you distrust everybody, so that the only thing you do trust is what you have safely in your pocket, and the secrets you carefully keep about how you came by it. The money you make this way does not let you believe in integrity. In fact, it makes you believe that your possessions are a fort erected to defend you, and the bulwark that will protect you. You fail to realize that

what is more beneficial and durable is a relationship of long standing based on solid ground. You fail to grasp the lovely and deeper shades of meaning life has to offer, and are therefore unable to enjoy them. The love of people you cannot buy with money, because money cannot buy people's hearts. Your feelings for them...your love for them...your sacrifices on their behalf...the work you do for their benefit, wholeheartedly, freely, selflessly...these are the noble qualities that will win you their hearts, not money. You must give in order to receive, because those who give nothing get nothing in return. As you love others, you will find they love you in return. If you put yourself first, ahead of other people, particularly if you are above them socially, you will find that they will turn away from you in disgust, and end up hating you. In short, an open heart is easily accessible to other people wishing to enter it, whereas no one will attempt to enter a constricted and selfish heart. Money alone without patriotic, social, intellectual, and professional principles is worthless, and will give you neither past nor future.

Minister on Transportation, Communication

93LA0156A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
16 Jul 93 p 5

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Mu'ini, transportation and communication minister, by 'Abd-al-Wahid Harjan; place and date not given: "Transportation and Communications Minister Tells AL-THAWRAH of Transportation and Communications Developments on 25th Anniversary of Glorious 17-30 July Revolution"]

[Text] There is no doubt that before the 17-30 July Revolution the transportation and communication sector, like other sectors of life and work, suffered from neglect and backwardness. Under the revolution, this sector received particular interest and special attention because of its importance in relation to other sectors.

The point of departure for dealing with the sector's prerevolutionary state of decadence and decay was to take serious action to stop the breakdown and decline and raise the level of services provided to citizens. Effective initiative was taken to strengthen the sector's supports and build its foundations by planning to establish and implement large projects, expand existing projects, modernize installations and equipment, and improve projects comprehensively and thoroughly. The past 25 years have truly been filled with hundreds of accomplishments by this sector, raising it to advanced levels in all its fields and areas.

To focus light on the accomplishments of the Ministry of Transportation and Communication during the revolution's quarter century of life, AL-THAWRAH met with Mr. 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Mu'ini, minister of transportation and communication. He spoke to us about the importance of the transportation and communication

sector, its state before the glorious 17-30 July Revolution, and indications of its development after the blessed revolution. He said:

One can readily perceive the importance of this sector from the well-known words of President and Leader Saddam Husayn when he received the Arab transportation ministers on 21 October 1989: "Without the transportation and communication sector, all other sectors contract or die, because this sector enters into the movement of every activity. This sector therefore has priority over the other sectors."

The leaders of the party and revolution therefore accorded this sector particular care and great attention. They constructed a modern transportation network not only for our country, but in order to create good international transportation links including communications, vehicular and rail land transport, and river and sea transport.

Communications, Post

In the communications field, which in all its varieties is considered a measure of a country's development and progress, before the glorious 17-30 July Revolution only colonial interests were served. Although the telephone first entered Iraq in 1910, its use was limited, manual, and for military purposes only. After a time, these services broadened to become civilian.

After the historic revolution on 17-30 July 1968, the past 25 years have abounded with many projects in the communications field. In the area of telephone exchange and network projects, cross-bar switches were introduced for the first time to Baghdad and a number of governorates. In 1979, large and small electronic exchanges began to be introduced with capacities between 4,000 and 30,000 numbers in governorate centers and a number of districts. In addition, 100 mobile electronic exchanges were set up and placed in operation in the country's districts and some subdistricts. Telephone networks for the exchanges were implemented and expanded to absorb the new capacities and ensure contact between the exchanges. This was done within individual cities by means of cables, digital communication, and optical cables. Permanent linkage exchanges were provided to facilitate intercity communication.

The minister added:

During the historic revolution's fortunate 25 years of life, the Public Communications Establishment has implemented many microwave projects connecting governorate centers and servicing the cities through which these projects pass.

Services were expanded after the glorious 17-30 July Revolution so that they included local and international telex services, fax, electronic mail and correspondence, in addition to local, national, and international telegraph service.

The minister stated that telephone density rose after the revolution from 0.9 percent in 1968 to 6.08 percent in 1985. The percentage decreased to 5.36 percent in 1990 because projects were halted due to the wicked Persian aggression against our beloved country and because of population increase.

Civil Aviation

The minister said the following about developments in the civil aviation sector after the glorious 17-30 July Revolution:

The civil aviation sector witnessed expansion and progress such as the country had never seen before in the fields of air transportation and services. This was especially the case after the national plans for an "explosion" were implemented. It became the duty of civil aviation to raise performance and keep up with developments in the civil aviation field and the achievements of modern technology. Our beloved country made numerous achievements in this field. Baghdad International Airport was opened in 1970 to domestic flights to the cities of al-Basrah and al-Mawsil. Saddam International Airport was built, one of the world's largest in terms of design, service level, and ability to handle 7.5 million passengers a day. It opened in 1982. Al-Basrah International Airport was built to handle 2 million passengers a day by the year 2000. It opened on 20 August 1988. In addition, one can count al-Muthanna Airport as a main airport for domestic air transportation. In 1991, expansion of the Firnas base was begun, so that it might be a local airport in the city of al-Mawsil. This was completed in 1992 at a cost of 3 million dinars. The airports of Irbil and Bamirni were started in 1990. Work on them was halted after the brutal 30-nation attack on our valiant country.

After the revolution, air safety staffs, most of which had consisted of Indian or foreign experts, were made Iraqi. The Civil Aviation Institute was developed and expanded, so that after the revolution it became the main resource for holding training courses in various aviation specialties. New courses were instituted in aviation science, air alertness, public relations, emergencies, self-protection, management, and languages.

The minister stated that after the brutal 30-[nation] attack on our country and during the reconstruction and building campaign, staffs working in this field were able to build an airborne laboratory to conduct aerial investigation of the capacity of civil and military navigation equipment. This used to cost the state large sums of money. An air control center was constructed at al-Muthanna Airport, the radar computer tape controlling radar search was manufactured, and the computer for the Saddam International Airport exchange was put into service.

Sea, Water Transportation

On the subject of sea and water transportation in Iraq before the glorious revolution, and achievements in the field after the revolution, Mr. 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Mu'ini said:

In 1952, the Iraqi Marine Transportation Company was founded with a capital of 1 million dinars, which was increased in 1957 to 2 million dinars, and increased again in 1961 to 5 million dinars. The company's purpose was to lease merchant ships and function as authorized commercial agency of marine companies.

After the glorious 17 July Revolution in 1968, the company received the backing and support of the revolution and its wise leadership. In 1969, it contracted to buy four ships, each with a load capacity of 3,600 tons. In 1974, it contracted with a German company to buy four more ships, each with a load capacity of 3,550 tons. In 1976, the company contracted for a third time to buy four more ships, each with a load capacity of 7,350 tons. In this way, the size of the Iraqi merchant fleet rose to 14 vessels, with a total load capacity of 114,000 tons. The company afterward became the General Establishment for Water Transportation. It continued operating with this fleet until 1985, when it bought the freezer ship Zayn al-Qaws, with a load capacity of 9,000 tons. In 1988, five ships were bought with load capacities between 3,900 and 6,000 tons, and four tugboats, each with a load capacity of 1,662 tons. The establishment's fleet now consists of 21 ships and tugboats that operate on regular and semi-regular navigation lines.

The minister said that after the blessed revolution the establishment made the staff of the Iraqi fleet Iraqi and dispensed with foreign seamen—officers and engineers. It enrolled its personnel in the Arabian Gulf Academy for Maritime Studies and sent missions abroad. The establishment's employees—shipboard workers as well as administrators—were enrolled in training courses in Iraqi universities and specialized institutes to acquire skills at all levels.

[Harjan] What achievements have been made in the field of river transportation?

[Al-Mu'ini] The establishment purchased 100 tugboats with a load capacity of 500 tons, and 67 tugboats to operate river transportation and transport goods and grain between Baghdad and al-Basrah. The establishment constructed wharves for this purpose in Baghdad, Wasit, and Maysan. It bought cranes and equipment for loading and unloading operations. It made a comprehensive survey of the section of the Tigris River between Baghdad and al-Basrah. It built a river slip at the al-Za'faraniyah wharves.

Airline Company

[Harjan] What developments and achievements has the Iraqi Airline Company witnessed during the revolution's quarter century of life?

[Al-Mu'ini] The staff of the company has been able to make advanced achievements in the field of air transportation during the blessed revolution's 25 years of life, especially after the historic nationalization decree. To implement a plan aimed at a great leap forward, the company bought a complete fleet of 16 Boeing aircraft at a cost of 600 million dinars. There was also a contract to train and prepare technical staff to maintain and pilot airplanes inside the country. In this way, the number of company-owned airplanes rose to 19—it had been three Tridents [name as published]. The number of available seats increased from 300 to 3,000 a day. A number of offices were opened outside the country. The number of passengers totaled 1.5 million in 1989. The number of tons transported rose to 30 million. Flying hours increased. Iraqi engineers carried out significant research inside the country on Iraqi, Arab, and foreign airplanes and saved \$15 million a year, in addition to training Arab and foreign pilots in Iraq. In this way the company realized revenues of 40 million dinars, including \$15 million.

The minister added that the company signed a \$500 million contract to buy five Airbuses—a contract open for increase to 15 aircraft. The company received a certificate of commendation from the International Aviation Council as a model company, because no unfortunate accidents had occurred within the company's 46 years of existence.

General Passenger Transportation Establishment

Concerning the establishment's fleet and its operating lines after the victorious 17-30 July Revolution, Mr. 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Mu'ini said:

In 1968, the General Passenger Transportation Establishment owned 682 buses, 329 of which were double-deckers. The need for buses increased because of the expansion of the city of Baghdad, the increase in its population, and the economic changes that affected the country after the historic nationalization decision. The fleet operating at the time became inadequate to transport passengers. The establishment therefore worked to import hundreds of buses from various sources, and available transport capacity increased. However, because of the two wars of honor and glory—Saddam's Glorious Qadisiyah and the Immortal Mother of Battles—and the blockade imposed on our valiant country, the establishment since 1981 has not been able to support its fleet with new buses. This has increased the suffering of citizens. An old fleet now operates in Baghdad and between Baghdad and the governorates. It frequently breaks down, and its negative effects have impacted the establishment's operating capacity.

Iraqi Ports

[Harjan] Can you sketch for us the development of Iraqi ports after the revolution?

[Al-Mu'ini] The revolution strove to improve the design of Iraqi ports by expanded building of new wharves at

the ports of al-Ma'qil and Umm Qasr and by building an advanced modern port at Khawr al-Zubayr.

The port of al-Ma'qil, built in 1919 on the Shatt al-'Arab at al-Basrah, was limited to three wooden wharves. The port saw no development before the revolution. Its loading and unloading capacities remained as they had been when the port was first built—about 3 million tons a year. After the 1968 revolution, 12 modern concrete wharves with model specifications were added. An anchorage with a 500-meter-long frontage was built for tugboats to anchor. Abu Fulus harbor was built, which includes three modern steel wharves equipped with all necessary equipment and cranes and three warehouses and extensive areas for preparing goods. In addition, a general goods wharf was built at al-Ma'amir with a 2,500-meter-long waterfront and a 500-meter-long anchorage for tugboats.

The port of Umm Qasr developed from its prerevolutionary state to become one of the region's major ports. Three concrete wharves had been completed in 1963; after the revolution one of them was modified to export sulfur from the al-Mishraq fields. It was equipped with a kilometer-long automatic conveyor belt and an automatic loader with a 15,000 ton per hour capacity. A wharf for standard containers was built. The 4-kilometer-long and 300-meter wide Umm Qasr canal was dug, with a basin 600 meters wide and 12 meters deep. This provided room to construct 40 wharves, including specialized ones, and enabled the operation of large ships with load capacities of 40,000 tons. The project to build the first 10 wharves on the Umm Qasr river was completed. Work continues to complete the civil works attached to the project. The hope is to complete them this year.

The minister continued:

The revolution completed the port of Khawr al-Zubayr, considered one of the most modern in the Middle East. It works by electronic control. It is an advanced trade and industrial port for the export of nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers, the import of iron ores, and the export of oil and petrochemical products.

Land Transportation

The minister said the following about developments in the field of goods transportation after the glorious revolution of 17-30 July:

A company for land transportation was founded by Revolutionary Command Council decree on 20 November 1991 and began operation in January of the next year. It has numerous duties involving the transport of goods inside and outside the country. The company currently owns 212 trucks of different kinds with a load capacity of 40 tons per truck, 857 tankers to transport fuel and asphalt, and 67 container [trucks] to carry goods. The company's fleet at the end of last year numbered 244 trucks, in addition to service vehicles, specialized equipment, and mobile workshops.

Railroads

Minister 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Mu'ini said the following about the most prominent achievements of the 17-30 July Revolution in the field of railroads:

One of the outstanding achievements in the area of railway development and improvement was completion of the broad-gauge rail line project between Baghdad, al-Basrah, and Umm Qasr as an alternative to the metric-gauge [as published] rail line. Improvements and modernizations were made to the line linking Baghdad, al-Mawsil, and Rabi'ah. Construction was started and completed on the rail line from al-Shurah to al-Mishraq to transport sulfur. This was an integrated project that included many overpasses, bridges, and service buildings. Two rail lines were built to the cement factory in Hammam al-'Alil. Many lines were built to production plants and factories.

He added:

The lines currently operating to transport goods and passengers are the 594-kilometer-long line from Baghdad to al-Basrah to Umm Qasr, the 535-meter-long line from Baghdad to al-Mawsil to Rabi'ah, the 504-kilometer-long line from Baghdad to al-Qa'im to 'Ukashat, and the 225-kilometer-long line from Kirkuk to Bayji to Hadithah.

Statistics on Country's Industry Detailed

93AE0564A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
7 Jul 93 p 7

[Article by Rahman al-Jawari: "Iraqi Industry Pulls Even With Foreign Industry, Surpassing It in Some Areas; Silver Jubilee of the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30"]

[Text] Since the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30, the industrial sector has enjoyed special attention and has been considered by its wise leadership the major engine driving developmental efforts. In accordance with that, the first development plan for 1970-75 was prepared, allotting the industrial sector alone 839 billion dinars [ID]. At the time, this amount represented 30 percent of total allotments for all other sectors.

The goals mapped out for this sector, at that time, were to complete and start up inoperative projects, develop the industrial sector with annual increases, establish strategic engineering, chemical, and petrochemical projects, and expand the establishment of export industries, and those industries which supplied primary materials and production necessities for other industries, to develop the private industrial sector and achieve industrial coordination and integration with other Arab countries.

This was followed by the second national development plan, for 1976-1980, which confirmed the continuity of development and the building of the complete industrial base necessary to develop the structure of the Iraqi

economy. The plan was notable for the huge volume of investments allotted to it: ID4.490 million, or 37 percent of total allotments for all sectors.

While preparing its third plan, Iraq fell victim to the brutal Iranian aggression. Development goals became linked to war conditions, which required a review of their distribution; thus most were devoted to the war effort on one side, and to meet the needs of the local market.

Engineering Industries

Despite these conditions, industry enjoyed great attention from our wise leadership. Numerous projects were implemented and expanded in the field of engineering industries. The country was able to produce large quantities of cable and wire in the Ur Plant for Engineering Industries, plus large quantities of aluminum, which is used in other industries.

Also in the field of engineering industries, the General Qadisiyah Plant for Electrical Industries, founded in 1980, took over the production of fans, irons, electrical scales, spark plugs, and electrical adapters, filling the local market with these products. It now enjoys the support of the leadership of the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30 and has introduced new industries, whose products have reached the local market—water measures, meat grinders, electrical heaters, and home ovens.

The support that the party and revolutionary leadership accorded the electrical sector is exemplified by the increase of maximum load from 316 megawatts in 1968 to 5,162 megawatts in 1990—a sixteen-fold increase—over the course of the revolution. Production of electrical power increased more than twenty-fold over the same period from what it had been in 1968, and the number of subscribers increased more than eight-fold.

The number of generating stations rose from five in 1968 to 31 in 1990, in addition to the increase in transport lines of various types, dozens of times over, from the number of them before the glorious July revolution.

Chemical Industries

Chemical industries also experienced impressive growth, with the 1975 establishment of the General Plant for Battery Industries—which manufactures both wet and dry cell types—whose production reached more than 1 million wet cell batteries in 1990 and more than 156 million dry cell batteries. And then there is the fertilizer industry, which helped to supply basic services to agriculture and other fields. In this industry, the first plant for urea fertilizer was established in 1971 with a capacity of 53,000 tons per year and 138,000 tons of uranium sulphate fertilizer; in 1977, the plant achieved number two [as published] with a capacity of 429,000 tons of urea.

In 1979, a new plant with a capacity of a million tons of urea fertilizer was started and was followed by the

completion and start-up in 1990 of another urea plant with a capacity of 500 tons, so that current capacity of urea fertilizer is 1.5 million tons, covering all the nitrogen fertilizer needs of the agriculture sector.

Turning to phosphate compound fertilizer, the Western Desert phosphate reserves were used to open a mine with a capacity of more than 8 million tons per year to feed the large phosphate fertilizer manufacturing complex, which meets the country's needs of all types of agricultural fertilizer.

In the paper and rubber industries, numerous plants were established after the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30, and their basic needs were supplied, with a rise in productive capacity that helped to solve gaps in the local market for both essential products, caused by the country's difficult conditions.

Mining Industries

The revolution set specific goals for the mining industries, such as mineral resources. These included the need to use this resource as the country's primary industrial support.

After the blessed revolution, the establishment of the first Iraqi national minerals company initiated work on careful plans, and subsequently the General Minerals Establishment, which was entrusted with geological surveys and the search for mineral resources and their development, within a public program to develop mineral investment and the mineral industry in Iraq, including manufacture and export.

In this period, from 1972-1984, a geological survey of the country was completed, yielding excellent and highly significant results on the distribution of mineral ores. It was followed by geochemical and geophysical mineral exploration that helped to identify numerous sites with mineral possibilities. In this way, phosphate ores were discovered, raising phosphate reserves to 10 billion tons; they also found indications of industrial clay, glass sand, and other minerals.

Textile Industries

Before the blessed July revolution, despite the availability of necessary formative elements at the time—raw materials and manpower—the growth of the textile industries was slow, out of line with the volume of demand and growth. After the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30, the revolution adopted a policy of total support for industrial projects, giving particular attention to spinning and textiles, allocating the funds necessary for its expansion and development, establishing many new and advanced projects. The industry was seen as one of the strategic and significant industries in the structure of Iraqi industry, aiming at satisfying local demand for varied textile products—chiefly cotton and wool textiles—and all types of woven and spun products. Textile production capacity rose 1,000 percent over the

course of the revolution; blankets, 590 percent; shoes, 414 percent; and ready-made clothes, 242 percent.

Food Industries

The food industries, considered one of the transitional industries of great importance in the industrial sector, also experienced years of great growth and economic development. Numerous projects were implemented in this field, the best example of which was the vegetable oil industry, whose production increased from between 400 to 700 percent.

Construction Industries

The construction industries, too, experienced rapid growth, thanks to the revolution. There was a very broad expansion in the fields of cement, ceramic bricks, alternatives to brick and plastic piping, technical gypsum, and concrete columns and frameworks, in addition to glasswork, mosaic tile, and other building materials. The country is now capable of producing 12 of the 17 types of cement used globally, according to international standards. The other five types can also be produced at any time they are needed, which is a sign of the growth of this industry over the history of the glorious July revolution. There were five cement factories in 1967; after the glorious life of the revolution there are 15, increasing production by 1,300 percent from 1968.

The industrial sector was one of those most hurt by the enemy's direct strikes and by the criminal sanctions aimed at cutting off all contacts with the countries of the world. This led to the suspension of the role of the productive sectors that constituted the principal support of the comprehensive economic and social development process. The sanctions have had a negative effect, halting the smooth movement of primary and reserve materials, and modern technology, leading to the exhaustion of most primary and subsidiary materials reserves, affecting the productive capacity of industrial products.

Given this situation, the noble Iraqis, relying on their scientific abilities and practical expertise, were capable of keeping the production lines going in a number of industrial installations. They did this by focusing on supplying local alternatives, to secure the continuity of production, and to work on finding alternatives for basic and secondary materials. Efforts were intensified by forming specialized central committees, encouraging and supporting the installations, and offering incentives to workers to be creative and innovative. In fact a number of local alternatives were created in a number of industrial fields, playing a part in easing the effects of the sanctions. The alternatives provided are valued at more than \$214 million.

Not only that, they focused on exploiting the country's available opportunities in manufacturing and maintenance shops, getting involved in the field of manufacturing reserve instruments needed for the ministry's, and other ministries', industrial projects, and restoring capacity to other tools and equipment that contribute to

the continuity of the working of machinery and factories, and realizing significant foreign currency savings. The number of manufactured parts in the past was 1,536, saving \$156 million, on top of other similar revenues from wise use of resources, in addition to workers acquiring more experience.

Iraqi freedom fighters also succeeded in completing projects abandoned by foreign companies as a result of the criminal sanctions, despite the fact that some of these projects used modern high technology. The Sinjar Cement Factory, with a capacity of 2 million tons per year, was completed and started up, and a new sulphur refining unit was completed in al-Mishraq. They contributed to the growth of new capacity and reduced production costs.

Agricultural Projects, Statistics Detailed

93AE0565A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
12 Jul 93 p 6

[Report by Yasir al-Mitwali: "The Revolution's Great Achievements in the Agricultural and Irrigations Sectors"]

[Text] The agricultural sector has, for the 25 years of the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30, enjoyed total and ample support for its basic missions, summarized by meeting the needs of our extraordinary people, and achieving self-sufficiency in the field of foodstuff production, besides meeting local industry's needs for domestic agricultural primary materials in producing industrial commodities.

The agricultural sector also helped to develop the country's resources and reduce its dependence on oil resources, and to fund economic development plans, in addition to its influence on the social situation in the countryside and in society as a whole.

Today, on the occasional of the Silver Jubilee of the Glorious Revolution of July 17-30, we met with Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Mr. 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud al-Sabbagh, to tell us about the achievements of the two ministries over the quarter-century of the victorious course of our revolution.

"First of all," he said, "we must hail our beloved Iraqi people and our commander in the Silver Jubilee for the anniversary of our eternal revolution. I would like to assert that our leading party, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, and our wise leadership, led by our President Saddam Husayn, may God lengthen his life, have given the agricultural issue exceptional attention. The agricultural sector's share received the most abundant allocation, and, since the advent of the great revolution, the financial support to develop it. As a result, this sector has become of importance to our national economy. One of the most important ways of keeping life going is of course a sufficient food supply.

"In view of the fertile soil of our combatant country, and our two eternal rivers, one of our most important goals was the expansion of land under cultivation. In order to explain the phases of development, I must address both the agricultural and irrigation sectors."

Agriculture Sector

"Over the years of the revolution, the agricultural sector has experienced the issuance of much legislation defining the relations between the peasants and the land and the agricultural production process according to modern, practical methods of how to best use cropland, both in terms of quantity and diversity.

"More than 11 laws and decisions were made by the Revolutionary Command Council, among them Agriculture Reform Law 117 of 1970, Ownership Regulation Law 42 of 1987, Irrigation Projects Implementation Law 130 of 1971, State Land Unification Law 53 of 1976, the Agricultural Land Economic Limit Law 137 of 1976, Agricultural Land Lease Law 35 of 1983, Arable Agricultural Land Lease and Administration Law 79 of 1985, Irrigation and Drainage Network Law 112 of 1983, Coast Use Law 59 of 1987, and Agricultural Joint Stock Company Law 116 of 1980.

"The leadership of the party and revolution also issued a number of laws that encompassed broad areas of agricultural life, of which we might mention for example the administrative organizations laws in the agricultural sector, which deal with agricultural reform, agricultural and livestock resources, and protection of livestock, in addition to the Revolutionary Command Council's decision regarding the leasing of land to the unemployed, and other decisions.

"The Ministry of Agriculture worked hard to develop crop production, as that is the most important part of agricultural activity, because it provides foodstuffs to citizens. They depend upon the principle of expansion in the field of agricultural crops, especially grains, industrial crops, the improvement of per-dunum yield, attention to local classifications and development, the supply of chemical fertilizers, and preventative anti-plague campaigns against various agricultural pests. There was also palpable progress in strategic crop yield, thanks to modern technology, and close attention to field crops and green crops. Despite the criminal economic sanctions against our country, the ministry has enacted a detailed plan for expanding the cultivation of strategic crops, particularly grains, for using indoor cultivation, setting up greenhouses and plastic houses, which increase yield from what it had been by using two growing seasons per year.

"The ministry focused on developing gardening, forests, the production of excellent fruit nurseries, planting forests, green belts, and orchards, in conformity with the Revolutionary Command Council's Resolution 455 of 1983."

Livestock Projects

"There was great progress in livestock projects as a result of establishing many of them in the country's governorates. They achieved a palpable increase in growth rates, raising the yields of milk, and upgrading local cattle. High-yield milk cows were imported, and special action was taken to secure the necessary credit facilities for setting up these projects at incentive prices.

"The number of meat-poultry projects reached 1,891 in 1980, and by 1991 had increased to 8,353. There were 34 poultry projects for egg production in 1980; by 1992 there were 152, of which 17 were large-scale. The country's production of chicken meat was more than 260,000 tons in 1989, while egg production was 1,833 million.

"There were about 21 egg incubation projects in 1980; in 1992, there were 28.

"In addition to 13 large projects with a capacity of 224 million eggs, with the first cattle station having been established in 1970, by 1989 there were more than 17 of them, with a productive capacity of 43,810; milk production was 298,000 tons.

"Fisheries flourished, thanks to the ongoing encouragement and facilities offered by the government for the founding of a number of fish farms. Before the revolution there were just four fish farms; by 1992, there were 169. The country's production of river fish in 1968 was more than 7 million kilograms; by 1990, the figure had exceeded 18 million kilograms.

"Turning to the agricultural services sector, which has experienced radical changes since 1968, there were in 1992 five times the number of tractors and reapers than there were in 1968."

Irrigation Sector

"The irrigation sector is considered to be integral and vital to the development of our agricultural resources. It and the agricultural sector constitute a single integrated economic unit, which is why the party and revolutionary leadership have allocated ample funds to develop this sector by providing the essentials for its success. There was an emphasis on developing water resources and ways of exploiting and controlling them, in addition to enhancing the fertility of the soil, in particular irrigation, drainage, and land reclamation matters, building dams and reservoirs, maintenance, artesian well digging, and preparing studies in this area.

"The years of the revolution have witnessed development and modernization, and the establishment of irrigation projects and numerous dams throughout the country. One of these was the Hamrayn [name as published] Dam, the Tharthar Project, the al-Qadisiyah Dam, the al-Fallujah Dam, the Saddam Dam, the al-'Azim Dam, the Bakhmah Dam, and the Dahuk Dam, in addition to the construction of a number of barrages and large hydroelectric plants on rivers and creeks in the

regions of al-Hillah, al-Dagharah, al-Shamiyah, al-Kufah, and Siddah al-Hindiyah, with the objective of regulating the waters and generating electrical power. There are a number of small dams on some dry river beds used to hold rainwater, and there are a number of wide dams in the country. Two of these are the Saddam Irrigation Project, which irrigates 820,000 dunums with flowing water, plus 133,000 dunums with other advanced irrigation methods, and the al-Jazirah Irrigation Project, with a total area of 1.2 million dunums in the Ninawa Governorate.

"A number of small and medium-sized irrigation projects were implemented, including the Lower Diyali Project, and the irrigation of al-Ishaqi, al-Dujaylah, Badrah, Jassan, al-Dalmuj, al-Musayb, Abu-Ghurayb, the Saddam Irrigation Project, and al-Diwaniyah."

Saddam River

"Irrigation projects culminated in the construction of the strategic Saddam River, in a time of challenge and steadfastness. It was completed in 1992 with a length of 565 kilometers, and helps to make arable 6 million dunums. The ministry is now completing the first phase of a project protecting the Saddam River from moving sands (dunes).

"In accordance with the instructions of the president, a number of new irrigation projects have been implemented below the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, among them are the Umm al-Ma'arik [Mother of Battles] River, the al-Qadisiyah River, the al-'Izz River, the Wafa' al-Qa'id [Commander's Achievement] River, and the Taj al-Ma'arik [Crown of Battles] River.

"Since the beginning of the revolution, there has been an emphasis on making land arable and implementing irrigation and drainage projects, and work to level, settle, and clean the soil and agriculture for many seasons. Agricultural density has increased more than 120 percent, and crop yield per dunum has risen. The spray method of irrigation has been used, and drip irrigation in some oases.

"The ministry has also dug artesian wells and established oases in the western desert, fought desertification, and built irrigation channels underground to prevent water evaporation, and to extend the life of these projects."

Vulnerability of Agricultural Installations

"Like Iraq's other economic sectors, the agricultural sectors were vulnerable to the effects of the unjust American-Atlantic aggression. The aggression purposely targeted a large number of agricultural-sector installations such as dams, barrages, and pumping stations, in addition to vegetable and livestock production projects.

"The ministry, however, with its technical bases and available equipment, on the orders of the government, was able to summon all its combined energies to work on rebuilding everything destroyed in the war of aggression.

"Among the projects damaged by the attacks were the Saddam, Qadisiyah, and Dukan dams, and irrigation projects in Anbar, Wasit, al-Najaf, and al-Basrah."

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Mr. 'Abd-al-Wahab Mahmud al-Sabbagh set out in his remarks the vast horizons that the agricultural sector had encompassed with its wide experience in strategic projects, which had a direct effect upon confronting the sanctions. It had focused on the productivity of wheat, barley, rice, and yellow corn, as well as on expanding industrial harvests, such as sunflowers and cotton, and other plants.

The minister reaffirmed that all the goals met by the agricultural sector, and the great development it had experienced and achieved in supporting our national economy, were thanks to the exceptional support and attention of our leader, President Saddam Husayn, and His Excellency's correct instructions, which enabled the agricultural sector to overcome the oppressive sanctions.

Housing, Reconstruction Statistics Detailed

93AE0568A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
18 Jul 93 p 6

[Interview with Mahmud Dhiyad al-Ahmad, minister of housing and reconstruction, by Husayn 'Umran: "We Have Implemented 62,000 Projects at a Cost of 9 Billion Dinars"]

[Text] I do not know where to begin to tell you about the achievements of the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction over the 25-year course of the Glorious July Revolution.

If we wanted to speak only of the achievements of the mujahiddin of this ministry over the course of the building campaign, we could fill dozens of sheets of white paper with numbers and information and even that would not give the Ministry its full credit.

Some accuse me of exaggerating, and I may be biased, but even a brief look at the facts, and the deeds of these mujahiddin, is enough to make me go even further. It is enough that the Ministry's workers built 966 bridges in Iraq during the Glorious July Revolution!

It is enough that this Ministry's workers and some of its companies earned the praise of President Commander Saddam Husayn with their outstanding and diligent work. It is enough that the President described these mujahiddin by saying, "You are truly heroes."

After this praise from the commander, what right is it of mine to extoll these serious, diligent workers as I write about their remarkable deeds over the 25 years of the Glorious July Revolution?

When I sat before minister of housing and reconstruction, Mr. Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad, for him to discuss these achievements with me, he lay dozens of files in front of me, each containing abundant information

about one of the many aspects of their implementation with which the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction is conversant.

This file is on the Ministry's achievements in the field of roads, another is about bridges, a third about the Ministry's achievements in developing cities; a fourth is on its reconstruction achievements; another about the Ministry's housing achievements; and a tenth is on its building and services achievements.

Again I say, I do not know where to begin to tell you about these achievements.

The Numbers Speak

So, shall we let the numbers and statistics speak? Fine. When the minister of housing and reconstruction saw my perplexity, he handed me a supplement to one of the files, and in it I read a summary of the number of the Ministry's achievements during the 25 years of the Glorious July Revolution.

Here is some of what I read:

In the area of roads, the Housing and Reconstruction mujahiddin built 781 roads, with a total length of 28,732 kilometers.

They built 966 bridges, with a total length of 68,271 meters.

They built 59,470 housing units, of which 14,590 were houses and 44,880 were apartments. Of course, as the minister of housing and reconstruction said, this number should have been higher, and would have been, had it not been for the economic sanctions, and the war conditions endured by combatant Iraq.

The housing and reconstruction mujahiddin built 849 buildings: hospitals, schools, and offices.

In the area of engineering consulting, the Ministry provided advice and engineering and technical expertise to 872 projects through the National Center and the al-Idrisi Center for Engineering Consulting. The National Center for Construction Laboratories conducted 12,630 million tests in the period from its founding in 1976, until the middle of this year.

Achievements Before and After the Revolution

Minister of Housing and Reconstruction Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad says:

These numbers give an idea of the volume of work carried out by the Ministry's staff. It will be even clearer to you if we compare the volume of work in the areas of roads, bridges, and housing before the Glorious Revolution, and after it.

The amount of money spent on roads and bridges from 1960-1976 was 43.729 million dinars [ID], while the amount spent on roads and bridges during the Glorious July Revolution was ID5.860.633 million. Thus we may

see the volume of development in the area of roads and bridges in the time of the revolution. This development becomes even clearer when we know that from 1979 until today, that is, during the tenure of the President Commander Saddam Husayn, the Ministry's people built 835 different fixed and pontoon bridges, with a total length of 52,409 meters. They built 649 roads with a total length of 13,526 kilometers; thus we may see the level of support the Ministry has enjoyed from President Commander Saddam Husayn.

Minister of Housing and Reconstruction Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad added:

Turning to housing, we may get some idea of the scale of development when we hear that just 362 housing units were built from 1962-1967, while 59,469 housing units were built in Iraq during the years of the Glorious July Revolution, of which 52,265 were built from 1979 until the present—since the accession of President Commander to the top government post.

Housing: Every Citizen's Problem

I said to the minister of housing and reconstruction: Before we speak in detail of the Ministry's part in redeveloping cities, the rebuilding campaign, and its role in Saddam's Glorious Qadisiyah, and the Mother of Battles, we must touch first of all on the Ministry's achievements in providing housing to citizens. The issue of housing has become the problem of every citizen who dreams of securing a roof over his family's heads. How about the Ministry's role in helping to realize this dream?

As I said before [the Minister replied] there were only 362 housing units built between 1962 and 1967. In the era of the July Revolution, there were 59,469 units built, both houses and apartments. If we want to get deeper into the details, we may say that 39,823 housing units were built from 1979 to 1983. This reflects the scope of concern on the part of the revolutionary leadership and the party, for providing housing to citizens. In those four years, the most important housing projects were completed, among them the 28 Nisan [April] Housing Project, with 2,300 housing units.

The minister of housing and reconstruction added:

The Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction prepared an integrated study for providing housing, in accordance with the instructions of President Saddam Husayn to provide suitable housing to citizens. The aim of the study was to provide housing to every family, and it was decided to implement this study, during the 20 years from 1982 until 2000, in four phases. The citizens' need for housing was demonstrated, with 3.380 million housing units, but the Iranian aggression, followed by the American aggression, prevented the implementation of the study. The Ministry has an integrated study for providing citizens with housing, which we will begin to

implement after obtaining the approval of official circles, and when the oppressive sanctions have been lifted from the heroic Iraqi people.

Building and Reconstruction Campaign

I said to the minister of housing and reconstruction:

We have spoken of providing citizens with housing, but what about the role of the Ministry's mujahiddin in carrying out the rebuilding and reconstruction campaign for a new Iraq, as our enemies have tried to smash and destroy the infrastructure of our beloved Iraq?

[Al-Ahmad] The Ministry's technical and engineering people were assigned to rebuild 114 bridges, and they were all completed, with the exception of the railroad bridge and the al-Kut bridge, which will be rebuilt this year, God willing. On top of that, the Ministry was assigned the rebuilding of nearly 600 buildings damaged by the bombs and missiles of the American aggression. Eleven hospitals were completed, praise God, along with the Ministry of Justice building and the National Command building, 22 schools, 5 telephone exchanges, 26 stations, the television and radio broadcast headquarters, all this in addition to more than 300 buildings belonging to various departments.

The minister of housing and reconstruction added:

The instructions of President Saddam Husayn and his visits to the worksites had a great effect on building confidence in the hearts and minds of the workers, and bringing out their hidden energies to the maximum. They shortened the work time and the miraculous happened. It is enough to hear what the President Commander said to the workers doing the reconstruction of the Republic Bridge, when he told them, "You are truly heroes." Those words were truly a great incentive to the housing and reconstruction mujahiddin, because we are doing everything in our power to rebuild a new Iraq.

The building and reconstruction campaign in which the Ministry's men took part was truly exceptional in Iraqis' minds, in terms of their creating alternatives, solutions, and bold methods of keeping the wheels of building and reconstruction moving, despite the sanctions against building and construction necessities in general.

Campaign to Rebuild Cities

I said to the minister:

You said that the Ministry's people began to implement the rebuilding campaign after the American aggression in March 1991, so that the Ministry had a wide field in which to counterattack, with which to demonstrate the Iraqis' response to aggression. The construction corps of the Ministry's organization were mobilized to implement the rebuilding plan together in the field of honor, and to build using their strength and ingenuity. Thank God, the Ministry's organizations succeeded in carrying out most of their rebuilding projects.

Before that, however, the Ministry had a large and significant role in the urban redevelopment plan, particularly when the cannons fell silent and the shooting stopped in the war of the Iranian aggression. The Iraqis put the war behind them to start a construction phase in their modern history, to eliminate the effects of war on their cities which were badly damaged by the Iranian aggression.

Would the minister of housing and reconstruction talk to us about the Ministry's role in the campaigns to develop and rebuild the beloved cities of al-Basrah, al-Fao, and Mosul?

[Al-Ahmad] Yes, the Ministry had the honor of participating in these campaigns. As to the campaign for the development and rebuilding of al-Basrah the steadfast, which the President Commander visited seven times during the campaign, it began on 12 February 1989 and ended on 12 June 12 of the same year. Streets and sidewalks were paved and finished for a total area of 12.401 million square meters; a 103,000 meter long sewer and rainwater system was completed, five automobile bridges were built, plus 10 pedestrian bridges, 35 pumping stations, the maintenance of 28 old bridges, 50 box bridges, the preparation and leveling of 120,000 square meters of agricultural land, and the planting of 9,000 seedlings.

The minister added:

The campaign helped to implement 17 asphalt factories with a total production of 759,000 tons of tar.

As to the campaign for the rebuilding of al-Fao, the city of fighters, and the Great Victory Gate, it started on 25 July 1989 and ended three months later. It was decided that we would build al-Fao in its original location with an area of two square kilometers, to hold 20,000 citizens, to contain 2,000 new residential units, plus schools, markets, hospitals, and other service buildings. Our ministry's share was to build 23 buildings and 27 houses, in addition to a 4,000-seat arena, and maintain and upgrade 252 kilometers of road.

Seven companies took part in the campaign to redevelop Mosul (said the minister of housing and reconstruction)—there were 20 neighborhoods in all. There were 6 million square meters of land to be leveled and 3.6 million square meters of loose gravel, 2.4 million square meters of tar and facing, a million square meters of street and rubble, and 3 million square meters of debris. Seven thousand men, 1,750 pieces of equipment, 25 ready-asphalt factories, and 600,000 tons of asphalt were used!

Participation in Irrigation Projects

I said to the minister of housing and reconstruction:

Now that the Ministry's organizations have completed most of the rebuilding projects they were assigned, we

have heard that the housing and reconstruction muja-hiddin have played a part in implementing some strategic irrigation projects, such as the Saddam River, the al-'Izz River, and the Umm al-Ma'arik [Mother of Battles] River. What are the details?

The minister answered:

Yes, the Ministry's organizations have participated in implementing irrigation projects. Six companies took part in the Saddam River project, four each in the al-Qadisiyah and Umm al-Ma'arik Rivers, and two companies in the al-'Izz River. While taking part in executing these projects, the companies' people were able to construct 7 automobile bridges, sink 520 different supports, and 24,534 million cubic meters' worth of earthworks, in addition to 740,000 square meters of paving. One of the Ministry's companies won the honor of carrying the *Allahu akbar* [God is Most Great] banner twice, for having distinguished itself by completing all its tasks before the deadline.

Engineering Consultations and Laboratory Tests

Engineering and technical consultations are largely proficient in executing projects; so it was essential to set up specialized consulting centers in the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction to undertake the planning and supervision of the implementation of important projects. Minister of housing and reconstruction Mr. Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad addressed the role of the engineering centers in providing technical expertise to projects implemented since the Glorious July Revolution.

[al-Ahmad] There are two consulting centers in the Ministry, offering their engineering expertise to projects. They are the National Center for Engineering Consulting which started up in 1973, and has provided expertise to 762 different projects, chiefly, at present, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministries of Education and of Higher Education, the Victory Arch, the Ministry of Health, and the Saddam Tower. This center has won several competitions, and placed first and second for the design for the Court of the Martyrs, first place in the Republic Bridge statue [competition], and first place in designing the Baghdad Clock and redeveloping Haifa Street.

The al-Idrisi Center for Engineering Consulting began its engineering activities in 1987, and has provided its expertise to 110 projects, most significantly the rebuilding of the Republic Bridge, the Samarra'i Hospital, the al-Qadisiyah Border Complex in Taraybil, the Homes for the Paralyzed in al-Karkh and al-Rasafah. This center has also won numerous competitions, among them for the Commemorative Statue for the Court of the Martyrs School, the development of the archaeological city of Babylon, and the statue for the Rebuilding Campaign of the City of Cities, al-Basrah the Steadfast.

The minister of housing and reconstruction adds:

There is also the National Center for Construction Laboratories. This is one of the largest specialized centers in the Arab world, with 12,630 million tests from 1976, the year it was founded, until the middle of this year. The Center offers 406 types of laboratory tests in 54 field laboratories. If you would like to know the scale of this center's growth, we may say that the year of its founding, 1976, it conducted 20,000 tests, while the number of tests last year was 1.2 million. Its revenues last year were 290 times what they were the year it was founded! Thus we can appreciate the growth rate of this vital center.

Lessons Learned from Rebuilding Campaigns

[Umran] After all these projects which the Ministry's companies have implemented, and the Ministry's heroic efforts to implement important and strategic projects, and after the Ministry's success in finding alternatives for many of the problems hindering implementation during the construction campaigns, would the minister speak to us about the chief lessons learned during the construction campaign or in the Ministry's work over the 25 years of the Glorious July revolution?

[al-Ahmad] The Ministry's accomplishments during the Glorious July Revolution have efficiently contributed to the accumulation of experience and technology transfer, thus helping the construction sector to work with high levels of boldness and confidence. In olden times, the Ministry's people were afraid to build a little stone bridge without foreign help. But now, as a result of the accumulation of expertise during the construction campaign, I may say that our companies' people were able to design and build the largest and most complex bridges. With all this expertise we will respond to aggression and launch a counterattack by rebuilding everything our enemies have destroyed. If you want to get into the details of the evolution of our work as a result of this accumulated expertise, I may observe that it has focused on several fields, most notably:

- Using expense models to build residential buildings and funding models to build residential units.
- Using pre-poured and prestressed box supports in consecutive batches with spaces exceeding 40 meters, in bridge-building. Plus, using perforated support walls instead of pillars. We used additional concrete materials to speed up its hardening and to obtain the desired strength in 16 hours instead of seven days.

Summary

Before saying goodbye to the minister of housing and Reconstruction, I said, "I would like a final number for the Ministry's activity over the last 25 years, since the Glorious July Revolution.

The Minister flipped through his files and papers, and after gathering them up and putting them down, he said:

"In the roads, bridges, and building implementation and construction fields, the technical and engineering departments of the Ministry's companies have implemented 62,066 projects at an approximate cost of ID8,721,420.

"With this number we may understand how immense the work is that has been accomplished by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction in the field of roads, bridges, and buildings in the 25 years of the Glorious July Revolution."

ISRAEL

New PLO Ambassador, Layla Shahid, Profiled

93AA0150D Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Weekend Supplement) in Hebrew 27 Aug 93 pp 6-7

[Article by Orly Ezola'i-Katz]

[Text] For a long time, Layla Shahid fought for the post of PLO ambassador in Paris. She often remarked that of all the capitals of Europe, Paris was the most important for the PLO. Indeed, Chairman 'Arafat singled her out to convey his pronouncements during official visits to the continent.

The battle for the post seemed impossible, almost lost. Ibrahim Sus, the organization's previous ambassador in the city, had made his appointment nearly permanent. Recently, however, his grip on the position had grown shaky because of his unbridled hedonism and the feeling he gave his critics—and even his sympathizers—that the pleasures of the city of lights were more important to him than the problems of Palestine. When he began to devote most of his time to efforts to obtain a French passport, efforts that eventually bore fruit, it was clear that the end of his time in the city was approaching.

Two people struggled for his patrimony: Layla Shahid, who was then ambassador to the Hague and responsible for affairs in Denmark, and Afif Safiy'a, the ambassador in London. Yasir 'Arafat is fond of strong, representative women in key official positions. Hanan Ashrawi had already established a precedent, and Shahid's course seemed almost set.

Some months ago, Shahid left to join Simone and David Susskind in celebrating the bar mitzva of their son in Brazil. Shahid is a dear friend of the couple, who founded a secular Jewish organization in the city close in outlook to Meretz.

At the party, Shahid met Professor Eli Bar-Navi of Tel Aviv University. The two fell into a long conversation and he was one of the first Israelis to hear from her of her new assignment.

Shahid, a rapid-fire speaker who is very warm and straightforward, impressed her Israeli listeners with the moderate views she expressed that day. She felt that Zionism is not a passing phenomenon, spoke of two states side by side and made an impression when she

bitterly criticized 'Arafat, in particular over the way that he is leading the organization.

"I am sitting on my trunks, waiting for the moment I get to Paris," Shahid told me in a phone conversation from the Hague. "I really love the city, I have a lot of work to do now. These are critical days for us."

Layla Shahid displayed an astonishing familiarity with the Israeli press. Wherever she is in the world, she receives the press summary sent out that morning from Israel. Last week, she showed an interest in Sever Plotzger following his article on the PLO published in YEDI'OT AHARONOT.

Shahid promised to give me her first interview on assuming her duties. During that phone call, however, she never imagined that taking her position would be accompanied by one of the gravest crises ever to grip the PLO, a crisis brought to an open struggle between the leadership in Tunis and the leadership of the territories and to an outright challenge to 'Arafat's primacy.

She arrived in Paris three days ago and forgot all her promises. Her secretary, replying with reserved politeness, said that Madam Shahid was busy in meetings at the French Foreign Ministry and would be unable to spend time with the media until next week.

Layla Shahid has personally felt the organization's precarious financial situation. She arrived in Paris with her personal effects, trunks, and suitcases. The organization could not provide her money for a hotel and she had to be put up by friends.

Those who know her say that she is very upset by what is going on in the organization. Shahid is considered close to 'Arafat and Abu Mazen. When she heard that Mahmud Darwish, who was tabbed for the post of Minister of Culture in the Palestinian state, had resigned his position, she saw that as a clear sign that 'Arafat's authority was being undermined and expressed her concern.

Darwish, who also is in Paris now, does not answer his phone. When I rang his house to hear from him about his resignation, a woman answered and told me that she would transfer me to him right away. Two seconds later, she picked up the phone again and asked who I was. I gave my name. A few more seconds passed and she said that Mahmud was not in, had not been in, and would not be in. She grudgingly wrote down my phone number and said that he would return my call. He never did, of course.

Shahid officially assumed her post yesterday afternoon. The first discussion she held with her office's reduced staff concerned the PLO's internal situation. Her acquaintances in the city claim that she prefers to stay out of sight at this stage until things settle down. Even her old friend, Knesset member Ya'el Dayan, did not have her call returned this week.

Layla Shahid was born in Beirut in July 1949. She is the daughter of Jamal al-Husayni, who was chief of the Arab Higher Committee during the Mandate and the Mufti's deputy. She received her education at the American University and, afterwards, studied anthropology at the University of Paris. She began writing her doctoral thesis but never finished it.

Shahid began her political activity in June 1976, then joined al-Fatah and became one of its key activists. Before serving as ambassador in the Netherlands, she acted as a representative in Ireland.

Palestinians see her as a new model of the Palestinian woman, humanistic, feminist, a leader who, among other things, is trying to pull the women's revolution along behind her. She sharply criticizes the Islamic world, which believes that a woman's role is to stay home and does not even recognize her existence. On the eve of her appointment, she told the French weekly VSD that she was sure she had received her position because of her abilities. Still, there is a special importance to the fact that a woman holds such a high position in the PLO leadership.

Shahid is married to the Moroccan writer Muhmad Bardas, who continues to reside in Rabat. They have no children. In one of her interviews, she stated that her life is one of exile. "I was born in Lebanon, I studied in France, I was married in Rabat, I work in the Netherlands, and soon I'll move to Paris," she said in an earlier issue of VSD. "I've chosen politics as my work and that fact that my husband and I are able to live together although he is in Rabat and I'm in Europe arises from our ability to overcome difficulties and live an unconventional life."

When news went out of Shahid's anticipated appointment, vigorous opposition arose in the French Foreign Ministry and at the Elisee Palace. Poking through archives revealed that she once had used forged documents to extend her residence visa in Paris. Worse yet, it was proved that she had written articles denying the Holocaust. There were quite a few phone calls between Paris and Tunis before the French eventually accepted the appointment.

Shahid later claimed that the matter was nothing more than a bureaucratic misunderstanding between her and the French authorities. As for the Holocaust, everyone who knows her asserts that she has changed her views and since expressed an entirely different opinion. She has been quoted as saying that the Holocaust cannot be allowed to happen again but that it also cannot be turned into a banality.

Israelis who have recently met her heard her speak of recognizing Zionism. More than once has she said that the Palestinians and the Israelis are two sides of the same coin. She has harsh things to say about Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. During one of her appearances in the Netherlands, she stated that violence against Palestinians has risen since he took office.

Within the PLO, she is regarded as one of the leaders of the central stream. She argues that the Palestinian people is one of the last nations yet to obtain independence, which is the primary goal. She anticipates the establishment of a secular Palestinian state which, she says, will be unique and original among the rest of the world's nations. She is certain that it will be a democratic state and eagerly speaks of economic cooperation between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Once, when she was asked if she supported Shim'on Peres' idea of an open economic market in the Middle East, she replied, "Definitely, that's the only option for the future, but Shim'on Peres is a bit premature. He's talking about this cooperation before solutions are found to the problems of the Palestinians, that is, an end to the military occupation. I think that such cooperation in economic markets can occur only after we have the experience of some years of peaceful life."

Her friends in Paris describe her as very warmhearted and quick thinking. As they listened, she recently mused over the PLO's decision to support Saddam Husayn during the Gulf war, which led to a suspension in the flow of cash from Saudi Arabia to the organization. They heard her say that money is the [PLO's] oxygen; when the tap was turned off, the collapse began.

In an interview with the French weekly, she dealt with the PLO crisis. "We've been in negotiations for exactly 21 months and this is the first time that there's been such a serious debate or clash. In my opinion, that indicates that the time is ripe. You could say that this is a loss of direction or focus, but I'm positive that everything will be straightened out in a little while because we are about to make historic decisions."

The Israeli Foreign Ministry, incidentally, thinks the same way. French sources this week quoted Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres as saying, "At last, there is an authentic, democratic PLO. They argue with words and resignations, not with rifles and gags."

If we peel away the personality problems and the ego issues, and push aside the PLO's financial crisis, what remains is the true kernel of the Palestinian dilemma: whether to adopt the line of the central stream, which is ready to enter into negotiations over Gaza and Jericho first, or to maintain the line demanding control of the territories which, for the first time, is more extreme than the Tunis PLO.

One way or the other, Layla Shahid's posting comes against the background of a new age in contacts between official and semi-official Israelis and the Tunis PLO leadership. All Europe these days is abuzz with such secret meetings. At the PLO's offices in Paris, they know that the Israelis have expressed serious doubts about the usefulness of these meetings and wonder whether a new situation has arisen in which the PLO leadership in the territories is more extreme but also the party that counts.

PLO officials in Paris are making attempts to broadcast calming signals and explain that such a situation cannot exist for long. 'Arafat, they contend, is a veteran war horse; he will pull through the crisis and the Tunis PLO will continue to lead.

Additional meetings between ministerial officials in Israel and PLO representatives in Europe are planned for the coming days—all in advance of resumption of the talks in Washington on the 30th. When these meetings take place, Layla Shahid will be at their center.

Meanwhile, she is trying to arrange her life in Paris. She hopes in the next few days to find the kind of apartment she needs, and with a smile tells friends of her hope that the organization will find the money to pay her room rent.

Her plan is to turn Paris into a hotbed of activity for PLO officials and Israelis geared towards the goal of promoting the founding of a Palestinian state. Aside from the instructions that she receives from Tunis, she brings with her great personal charm and an open mind and expects that her term of service in Paris will see historic achievements for her organization.

Those who know Layla Shahid's ambition argue that only one other goal will stand before her after Paris: seeking the PLO leadership or obtaining a senior position in the Palestinian government—if and when it arises.

Geographers To Reconfigure Green Line

93AA0150A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
15 Aug 93 p 2

[Article by Orly Heqla'i]

[Text] It is difficult to know when, if at all, a Palestinian state will arise alongside Israel. As a political matter, the subject still seems remote, but even now, two men are about to redraw the Green Line that will separate the two states. They are a pair of political geographers, Dr. David Neumann and Dr. Razi Falah, who recently received a grant of \$100,000 to conduct a study of the geographic implications of solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. As part of their investigation, which will be done in Canada, they will attempt to mark out a new border, one that will be optimal for the two states to exist in the region.

"If and when there is a solution to the dispute, it will be very important to deal with questions such as where the border will be, how it will be fixed and what will happen to the settlements and water sources. These are all geographic issues that have to be taken into account," explains Neumann.

The two scholars first crossed paths in London when Falah, an Arab-Israeli of Bedouin descent, arrived at Durham University to write his doctoral thesis on the

Arabs of the Galilee. Neumann was writing his doctoral thesis at the same time, on Gush Emunim's settlement drive.

The two became friends over the years and made an attempt to work together, "but it didn't happen. It was hard for us to write as a team because our basic starting points were very different. I think he's too political while he thinks I'm too Zionist," says Neumann. Despite that, he is optimistic about the year of working together that awaits them. "We have a lot of arguments, but I think that the effort will be worthwhile."

On the basis of parameters of land use, settlement, traffic and strategic points, Neumann and Falah will study alternatives for marking out a line separating the two nations. The original Green Line will serve as a basis for study, "but we'll have to redraw it because the political reality has changed so much during the past four years."

Many of Neumann's colleagues believe that he is too optimistic. They assert that his very attempt to establish a border reveals an assumption that a solution to the dispute is close at hand and that the government can be helped by the recommendations of his study while the technical aspect carries far less weight in reality than political constraints. But Neumann is convinced that politicians in the near future will pay close attention to the geographic elements that need to be considered and will have to rely on his study.

Dr. Falah is arousing a great deal of controversy in the world of academia. Because of his opinions, he cannot be pigeonholed and is suspected by both sides. The Jewish geographers contend that he is anti-Israeli and using science to advance his aims, while the Arabs think that he is too pro-Israel.

Falah does not claim to represent all Israel Arabs and their interests, "but as a scientist, I can interview people and know whether they are speaking seriously or not. And that's not simply because I know the language but because I understand the Arab mentality."

His colleague Neumann, a former activist in Gush Emunim and the son of an Orthodox rabbi, describes himself as "someone in the center with leftist tendencies who keeps the tradition." In his research, he does not intend to seek help from Biblical sources speaking of "from the Tigris to the Euphrates." "The reality is that we have to find a solution to the existing dispute, but that belief is not a consideration in my thinking. As someone who engages in analysis and research, I am less subject to ideological pressures. In my work, I always try to be rational."

[Heqla'i] Will your research eventually land on the prime minister's desk?

[Neumann] The current government is aware of the project and someone will read our work. If we present the material in a well-supported way, the chances are not bad that it will be taken into consideration.

[Falah] I hope that people will seriously consider the alternatives that our project will present, but in light of what's happening on the ground, each side is trying to get the most territory, and that is the only thought guiding them. Many people will read this study, but politicians never pay serious attention to academic research. Anyway, I prefer to deal with the implications of different lines that will lead to peace rather than to study the implications of war.

Religious Soldier Units Discussed

93AA0150C Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (Weekend Supplement) in Hebrew 27 Aug 93 pp 20-21

[Article by Ari'ela Ringol-Hoffman]

[Text] Some days after our car passed through the Fadol checkpoint—straining to climb the magnificent cliff on which the settlement was built—two IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers, Lev Pisahov and Tomar David, were shot on the same spot. A night or two later, pictures of the place were shown on television. The switchback road, barbed wire at the checkpoint, an Arab house of stone commandeered for use and two soldiers, under knitted skull caps, on the roof.

The day that Pisahov and David were shot, Yaron Hen, a soldier in the Intelligence Corps, was buried in the military section of Mt. Herzl cemetery. His charred body had been found in the Arab settlement of Bituniya near Ramala. From the funeral, the media showed a picture of his best friends beside the open grave. Like him, all of them wore knitted skull caps.

Yaron Hen—according to reports published following his death—was a close friend of Gidi Has, a graduate of a yeshiva high school who was killed in Lebanon. Another graduate of the state religious school track killed in Lebanon early in June was 'Ezra Asher of Tequma. He fell in an ambush in which our own forces fired on one another.

And that is how our trip to Fadol, to see the preinduction religious seminary for graduates of yeshiva high schools, became linked to later events and the pictures that accompanied them. All this is related to what we heard from Professor Mordekhay Bar-Lev, a sociologist, lecturer, and scholar at Bar-Ilan University, himself a wearer of knitted skull caps. In the 1950's, he told us, when representatives of the religious kibbutzim went to David Ben-Gurion with a list of demands, including requests for money, the prime minister looked up from his papers and fixed his gaze on the men. "And what," he asked, "is your share of the military cemeteries?"

Today, says Bar-Lev, no one asks that question anymore.

The IDF says that the knitted skull caps of today are what once were children of the kibbutzim. Field commanders at the level of company officers, deputy battalion commanders and battalion commanders say that there is something very attractive about the religious

soldiers. They radiate motivation of another sort—stubborn, uncompromising. They use a different terminology, says a major in an elite unit. They do not speak about "self-realization" or the best way to get through three years in the army but in terms of "what and where I can contribute more." They can now be found, he says, in all the units in which we used to see kibbutzniks from the valley: in the general staff reconnaissance unit, in special units, and in volunteer units.

The turning point, they say in the army—and Prof. Bar-Lev confirms this from data in his possession—came during the 1970's after the Yom Kippur War.

During the Six Day War, says Prof. Bar-Lev, the armored brigade had just one religious officer, from Kibbutz Tirat-Tzvi. That same year, incidentally, only one army-related yeshiva operated. Today, there are dozens of officers and 14 army-related yeshivas.

The religious-national public has led settlement, says Knesset member Zevulun Hammer, a former Minister of Education who was among those pushing for science instruction and entry into the world of computers, medicine and science. He also spearheaded the drive to go into elite units, the officer corps and positions of influence. And that, he says, has no connection to Gush Emunim.

Gush Emunim, it turns out, casts a heavy shadow over the entire subject. "I'm happy to get them as soldiers," a senior officer told us. "But I don't want to see them in command positions, certainly not in the near future." Without mentioning names, there will be army men and others bringing up the Jewish underground. The names of the commander of the Jewish underground, Menachem Livni, an engineering officer, of Avino'am Katri'eli, who once served in an elite unit, and of other members of the Jewish underground keep coming back to mind.

Vast rivers of adrenalin flowing through the arteries of religious-national Judaism were also needed to convince people to go into the army, says one person we interviewed.

Even from the road leading from Qastina Junction to Merkaz Shapira, one can make out the army training equipment owned by the Or-'Etziyon military academy. Prefabricated structures lacking any sign of comfort or a hint of luxury. A young soldier escorts us inside, females soldiers staff the office. The interview with Lt. Col. Pinhas Ne'eman, commander of the academy, takes place in the presence of the IDF spokesman in the commander's quarters.

Ne'eman is a cautious subject, to put it mildly. He does not rush to join in. It is clear that the men who direct the educational institutions from which religious students stream into the army bring with them more than a dab of concern regarding anything to do with their relations with the media.

The military academy here was founded in 1980. In September of that year, it began its first school year. Among the founders were 'Ezer Weizmann, then minister of defense; Zevulun Hammer, then minister of education; and Rafel Eytan, then chief of the General Staff. The man behind the founding was Rabbi Druckman. Several options existed at the time: the Tzeitlin high school in Tel Aviv, for example, wanted to adopt the academy. There were also other institutions.

Nine students graduated in the first class. Twenty graduated in the 10th class, which left the academy last July.

Like graduates of the Riyali military high school academy in Haifa, graduates of Or-Etziyon prepare to become officers. Study of the distribution of these students shows that half go into elite units: the GHQ recon unit, recon companies, assault units and the like. Thirty percent enter the armored corps and the rest are spread around other infantry units. Some 95 percent (!) become officers.

For anyone familiar with manpower rosters in the IDF's combat units, a quick statistical calculation indicates what share of the army's junior command positions the graduates of the academy will accumulate in the years to come.

According to Ne'eman, the students come from all over Israel. A breakdown of the numbers reveals that 20 percent come from beyond the Green Line. Ne'eman, who is not enthusiastic about turning over the figures, says that on the one hand, they bump into that part of the religious population that does not go into the army and, on the other, with those who argue that religious Jews are entering the IDF to take it over. So how, in light of this, do we explain the high numbers of students coming from the territories? Perhaps by greater awareness, Ne'eman would say.

Registering students undergo a series of screening and classification tests. Only 60 percent are arriving for the 10th class of those who came for the ninth. This year, for example, 200 students were registered. The academy accepted close to 50. Just under 40 will go on to the 10th class.

The daily routine is rigorous. The school's emblem depicts a Torah and a sword. Graduates of the academy, says Ne'eman, are set to leave the place just as was written of King David: He makes himself a bookworm for studying Torah and stands firm as a tree in time of war.

The academy handbook, which spells out the various entrance ceremonies, graduation, training days, paratroop courses, and studies and activities, also reveals more than a little IDF involvement. Training Department chiefs Col. (res.) Doron Rubin and Col. (res.) Yosi Ben-Hanan display the cadet ranks that they were awarded. It is no accident, incidentally, that Ben-Hanan has been considered a sponsor of the academy throughout all his years and in all his posts. He is the

officer who gets requests and from whom operational instructions arrive. A dear man, they say of him at Or-Etziyon, a dear man.

In 1974, Prof. Bar-Lev published his first study on the subject. His study examined the distribution in the army of graduates of the "No'am Seminary" at Pardes Hana. The seminary, a yeshiva high school, was then considered, as it is today, a prestigious institution of the religious-Zionist community. Even then, it took a more nationalistic line.

The study revealed that 35 percent of the seminary's graduates went into combat and volunteer units. Eleven percent stayed in the standing army. Twenty percent of them went into officer courses. Forty-five percent reached junior command rank.

Without going into precise numbers, we can state with certainty that this is true today—the number of this yeshiva's graduates entering combat and volunteer units is double. The number remaining in the army has tripled. And same has happened with the number becoming officers.

Ten years ago, again on the basis of Bar-Lev's data, about 15 percent of yeshiva high school graduates became *haredi*—they went to *haredi* yeshivas and did not enter military service. Today, that figure hovers around 1 to 3 percent at most.

Beginning in the 1970's, an entire generation, says Bar-Lev, has felt obliged to become involved. And the changes are not merely statistical. Today, he says, it is not merely a matter of paying dues to the state.

This pressure, which arose from below, also led to founding of the religious military academy and, later, of the Torah preinduction preparatory courses.

On finishing school, Dani'el Hadar, a graduate of the military academy, will study agriculture in Rehovot. When he finishes there ("I hope to do that in two or two and a half years"), he will start a pilot's course. When another graduate, Shai Angel, who comes from Neveh Deqalim in Gush Qatif, finishes school, he will begin studying computers at Ben Gurion University. After that, he is to start a naval course. Hadar and Angel will study at army expense. They will pay back the debt later during their extra years of service.

Gil'ad Perahi, a graduate from Jerusalem, will go on to Yatir for a year of preinduction training and then into the Golani recon company.

Yitzhaq Di'or, "Dukhy," the secretary of the religious kibbutz federation and a member of 'Ein Tzurim who has seen a thing or two in his life, says that the army only stands to profit from the delay in military service; it is better to draft youths of 19, 20, or 21 years of age.

The religious kibbutz movement, too, which historically has sent the great majority of its sons to serve in combat

units in the army, prefers that the draftees first complete a year of what they call "spiritual toughening."

Clearly, the techniques of spiritual toughening that the religious establishment has devised over the years are highly varied. A graduate of a religious high school can be drafted straight into the army like any secular youth his age. He can, if he wants, study Torah at a higher level yeshiva for two or three years and be drafted after that. If he enters a haredi yeshiva, he will be required to do his bit in comfortable surroundings, which greatly disturbs the army, and his whole interest is in assuring the rights of a yeshiva student. In that event, the public is destined to meet him in the military rabbinate, for example, assuring that soldiers like Pisahov will be laid to rest along the fence.

A third possibility is going to a military-related yeshiva. That means signing up for five years, including a year and a half of active service. The rest of the time is devoted to study. As part of the "integration" program of the religious kibbutz movement, a young man studies two years at a post-high school yeshiva and serves three consecutive years of full service.

The military preparatory programs—of which the first, at the 'Eli settlement, was founded about five years ago—offer an intensive year of spiritual and Torah toughening along with preparation for military service. Five such programs—'Eli, Fadol, Yatir, Qeshet (on the Golan Heights), and Safed—are now in operation. Four of them are located across the Green Line, most certainly not by accident.

Aside from the higher and militarily affiliated yeshivas, the rest of the programs place an emphasis on entering the officer corps.

The first army preparatory program was initiated by Rabbi 'Eli'ezer Sadan, a prominent figure at the "Merkaz HaRav." It is he, too, who heads it today close by 'Eli. When the concept took concrete form, Zevulun Hammer was Minister of Education and Sadan, they say at the ministry, spent hours there, pored over files, developed the idea and pushed for it. People still in the ministry remember more than a few stormy meetings, some of them unpleasant, and Sadan's flinty stubbornness. Hammer enthusiastically supported the idea. Moshe Arens, then defense minister, was in no rush to promise his help and, when it was promised from above, slow in offering it.

Rabbi Me'ir Katz, who works at the Fadol program, was exceptionally polite though no less diligent. Katz, a reserve officer in the armored corps, founded the preparatory school two years ago. He inspected several possible locations, including Be'erot Yitzhaq, before eventually settling on Fadol, a settlement established on a chalk precipice in a scenic spot, a half hour's drive from Petah Tiqva yet steeped with a sense of total isolation.

About 40 students study at his school. They live in mobile homes on the eastern side of the settlement, four

and sometimes five to a apartment and a half. The daily routine includes intensive study. Nights, weekends, and vacations are devoted to topography, physical training, and a grounding in Land of Israel studies. This year's graduates will enter pilot, seaman, naval and assault unit courses, while some will go into infantry units.

Without exception, all the preparatory programs maintain close relations with the students. Once each month, there is a regulation parcel—I would almost say an army parcel: a package of sweets, a package of waffles and so on. For special occasions, there will also be a special note to cheer up the soldier and remind him of why he has come and where he is headed. The soldiers, for their part, make sure to pay visits and help the boys in the program with anything relating to religious law.

Directly or indirectly, the religious students are subsidized by the army or the state. At the military academy, they pay only about a third of the cost of maintaining them. The situation is the same in the preinduction preparatory programs, not to mention the military-related yeshivas. A senior army officer notes that the state benefits from this arrangement; it gets good soldiers in return.

"A generation of religious Zionists, which serves as a bridge to the far extremes within the nation of Israel, is being educated here," says Lt. Col. Ne'eman. "The difference between our officer and any officer from the city," says one of the programs' rabbis, "is that they talk about self-realization and we talk about service."

"The religious public," states Prof. Bar-Lev, "will not capture the army, but it also will not lend a hand to tarnishing the army's image. It will step into the breach when danger threatens the state." A religious officer says, "The fact that the preparatory programs are located in the territories does not mean that the leadership of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza controls them or that they belong to Gush Emunim."

Zevulun Hammer talks about the insult felt by this public, which, on the one hand, raises the cream of its youth for combat service and, on the other, is spurned by the state's leadership in favor of the non-Zionists of SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim]. The father of a boy who went to the academy speaks of the religious chief of staff whom we will have someday, and someone mentions the affair involving Afi Fein, a brigadier general who could have gone much farther if not for the leftist media.

These people present the positive inclinations that the religious soldiers bring with them, but also speak about the secularization that they undergo in the army and the need to combat that. The longer the term of service, it is clear, the more of them discard their skull caps. The way to overcome this process, they say, is to expand their ranks in the army.

Major N., a graduate of the military academy who serves as deputy commander of an elite battalion, says, "There

is a problem. On the one hand, we serve within a framework that isn't easy on a religious soldier. On the other, we know that some in the top ranks fear our advancement. They tell themselves that just now, with agreements impending and all that this implies, maybe it's not the time to give the religious control over the army."

KUWAIT

Deputies Demand Government Solve Debt Problem

93AE0528A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Jul 93 pp 1, 4

[Article by Nasir al-Mutayri]

[Text] Kuwait—Several Kuwaiti National Assembly deputies from various political currents and tendencies yesterday demanded that political responsibility be forced upon the current government, and that it be given the responsibility of remedying the collapse of Kuwaiti foreign investments.

In a session devoted to debating the report of the economics and finance committee in the National Assembly on foreign investments, deputies of the Kuwaiti parliament affirmed the need for the assembly to take a decisive historic stand to try those accused of misappropriating public moneys, whether in foreign investments, the public establishments in the state, or in the oil companies, in some of which financial overruns have occurred.

Deputy 'Abd al-'Aziz al-'Adasani pointed out that political questioning with regard to the collapse of Kuwaiti investments should fall on the current finance minister, Nasir al-Rawdan, and not on former finance ministers. Deputy Talal al-Sa'id also affirmed that the current finance minister ought to take responsibility for the ministry that he inherited after the collapse in Kuwaiti foreign investments.

Deputy al-Sa'id stated that in yesterday's session he received a written threat from one of those involved in the investment issue, warning him to cease his pursuit of the matter.

Deputy 'Adnan 'Abd al-Samad, who read the report of the finance committee in the National Assembly, had laid the blame for the collapse of Kuwaiti investments on the failure by successive Kuwaiti governments to select qualified people to administer the investments, as well as on the reduced level of government oversight on the office of Kuwaiti investment in London.

Deputy Khalid al-'Uduwah said that the National Assembly is in conflict with certain Kuwaiti "centers of influence," which are working to cover up information pertaining to the fate of public moneys. He pointed out that Kuwait is suffering from what he described as "an authoritarian habit."

Al-'Uduwah stated that everyone who had had a part in the finance ministry portfolio since the dissolution of the National Assembly in 1986 up to the return of parliamentary life in Kuwait in October 1992, ought to be questioned, and he came down hard on those accused of the fall of Kuwaiti investments.

While the government confirmed yesterday that it was responsible for remedying the situation and for the steps it has taken in this regard, the finance minister, Nasir al-Rawdan, stated that the government bore absolutely no responsibility for the fall in investments, because that happened before the government was formed.

Parliamentary debate raged in the National Assembly. Deputy Muhammad Dayfallah Sharar recommended that the charge of "public treason" be brought against those accused of misappropriating the investments, and that the state prosecutor follow up to arrest and try them.

He also stressed that the accounting office must supply the National Assembly with a plan on the future of Kuwaiti investments.

Deputy Ahlmad al-Khatib, one of the Kuwaiti opposition leaders, criticized Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah for not answering, in the session before last, the two most important questions broached by the assembly, namely: What is meant by the limiting of signature authority following the invasion catastrophe between 'Ali al-Khalifah, Fahd al-Sabah, and Khalid al-Sabah?

The second question: What did the government do in the face of the resignation offered by members of the executive committee in the office of investment in December 1990, when they pointed out that suspicious circumstances existed?

Opposition Deputy 'Abdallah al-Nibari said the government is trying through certain manipulations to absolve 'Ali al-Khalifah, the former finance minister.

Deputy Dr. Isma'il al-Shatti, chairman of the finance and economics committee in the assembly, made several recommendations, most importantly that the government set up a long-term program in which it would set down its projections on the growth of investment funds, and that it review the investment decision-making process, as well as the authority given to those who administer investments, and that the London office of investment be removed from the administration of the investments of Spain.

Finance Minister Nasir al-Rawdan affirmed that the government has taken many steps to bring balance back to the investment apparatus.

He added that the government has completely stopped participating in failing investments.

At the end of yesterday's session, the National Assembly decided that there had been enough debate, and that announcing the recommendations would be postponed to a future session.

On another subject, Deputy Mubarak al-Duwaylah continued to pursue Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah with questions on what he called suspicious circumstances and overruns in the arms budget of the Kuwaiti army.

Yesterday Deputy al-Duwaylah presented a new question to the defense minister on the disappearance of 50 million French francs from the value of a contract concluded between the government and a French company to remove mines from Kuwait.

The deputy documented his question with a report published by the French magazine, *EXPRESS*, in its 24 June issue. *AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT* has obtained a copy of that report.

The report states that "the French company that was contracted with would not have been among the companies that had submitted bids to perform the required task, if not for the intervention of a Kuwaiti businessman close to the Kuwaiti defense minister. Due to his influence, all the companies' bids were cancelled and the French company got the deal."

Deputy al-Duwaylah asked the defense minister for his testimony in the following:

First: Did the French company Sofremi specialize in mine-sweeping, and did it have previous experience?

Secondly: Is there a company that dealt secretly with the aforementioned French company? What was the value of the contract made secretly with the company, and how much was the original contract with the French company?

Thirdly: When is the French company scheduled to complete its work, according to the original contract? Has the work stopped, is it on-going, or has it been completed?

Fourth: "Please supply me with the daily report that is presented on the work of this company by its overseer, and please supply me with the last 30 reports submitted."

It should be mentioned that Deputy Mubarak al-Duwaylah had submitted papers and documents relating to large overruns in the military defense budget of 3.5 billion Kuwaiti dinars, in light of which the assembly formed a five-member committee out of the investigative committee to investigate the defense overruns, something that caused tension between the National Assembly and the defense minister. The crown prince and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Sabah stepped in to solve it and resolve the conflict.

For his part, Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah has denied that there are any overruns in the Kuwaiti arms budget, pointing out that he personally oversees the process of concluding arms deals for the Kuwaiti army, as well as contracts for ridding Kuwait of mines and the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion.

Yesterday Deputy al-Duwaylah confirmed that he has [evidence of] many "suspicious practices" in the administering of the defense budget that occurred after the liberation. He said, "There are many matters that will soon be exposed."

SAUDI ARABIA

Al-Turki on Islamic Affairs Ministry Priorities

93LH0016A Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 12 Jul 93 p 13

[Interview with Dr. 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-Muhsin al-Turki, the new minister of Islamic affairs, endowment, call, and guidance by 'Abdallah al-'Urayfaj on 11 July; place not given]

[Text] Riyadh—His excellency Shaykh, Dr. 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-Muhsin al-Turki, the new minister of Islamic affairs, endowment, call, and guidance expressed his gratitude to the custodian of the two noble holy places, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, immediately following the promulgation of his honorable decree to create a ministry concerned with Islamic affairs and to appoint him minister of it.

His excellency, in a special interview with 'UKAZ, said that the trust of the beloved king is the object of his utmost pride and esteem, especially inasmuch as this trust has been invested in him by the leader of the preachers himself to serve Islam and the affairs of Muslims throughout the world. He emphasized that the creation of a ministry for Islamic affairs embodies the great concern of the leader of the nation with supporting important Islamic aspects. It also is a renewed signal of the Kingdom's concern, which has been ongoing since the first Saudi state was founded, with the affairs of Islam and Muslims, and its continuous, enormous participation in supporting the message of the Islamic call domestically and abroad.

His excellency, the minister of Islamic affairs, endowment, missionary work, and guidance, said that the ministry will participate in implementing the state's plan and in consolidating efforts, in cooperation with different governmental agencies, related to the support of Islamic centers, associations, and organizations at home and abroad.

The following is 'UKAZ's entire interview with his Excellency Dr. al-Turki:

Trust In Which I Take Pride

[Al-'Urayfaj] Your excellency the minister, we would first like you to note your impressions as you assume this

new responsibility in the light of the promulgation of the decree by the custodian of the two noble holy places.

[Al-Turki] There is no doubt that the trust of the custodian of the two noble holy places, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, is an object of pride and esteem, especially inasmuch as this new responsibility was invested in me by the leader of the preachers himself to serve Islam and Muslims and to utilize all capabilities to spread the Islamic call throughout the lands of the earth.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to register my highest assurances of gratitude and acknowledgement for the leader of this nation and the guardian of the Muslims, following his precious, honorable trust, and I beseech the almighty Lord to help me bear the message and discharge this trust in a manner which is pleasing to God the exalted and sublime, and to help me merit the favorable judgement of the one who appointed me.

Concern Has Its Dimensions

[Al-'Urayfaj] What is your view of the dimensions of the decree of the custodian of the two noble holy places, may God preserve him, to establish a ministry concerned with Islamic affairs?

[Al-Turki] The establishment of a ministry for Islamic affairs no doubt embodies the great concern of the leader of the nation and the ruler of the Muslims, the custodian of the venerable two holy places, may God preserve him, with supporting these important Islamic aspects. The creation of this ministry, which is responsible for Islamic affairs, endowment, houses of God, and Islamic missionary work, is an indication of the Kingdom's ongoing concern with the affairs of Islam and Muslims, since the establishment of the first Saudi state and the unification of this country by its great founder, His Majesty King 'Abd-al-'Aziz, may God rest him in peace, through to the period of the custodian of the two venerable holy places, may God let him triumph.

The Islamic world today realizes the Kingdom's ongoing colossal contributions to supporting the message of the Islamic call at home and abroad. The concern of the leader of this nation with the call to God is embodied in his intense care and concern for the well-being and prosperity of the two noble holy places in noble Mecca and enlightened Medina, his desire to build houses of God at home and abroad, his continuous support for and personal contributions to Islamic centers abroad, and his concern with the construction of schools and colleges throughout the world to educate Muslim children in order to rear a true, Islamic young generation.

Talk of the Ministry's Organization To Follow Its Crystallization

[Al-'Urayfaj] Could you comment on the method for organizing the structure of the new Islamic affairs ministry?

[Al-Turki] I believe that the organization of such matters is extremely easy, especially as this country has—thank God—experts in the field of Islamic missionary work. The matter of organization is only a matter of time. God willing, we will speak about these matters after they are fully crystallized.

As stated in the noble royal decree, the ministry will be responsible for everything related to Islamic affairs, endowment affairs, guidance, and the call to God. It will form a committee of relevant agencies to ascertain the authorities exercised by governmental ministries and agencies which enter into the purview of the new ministry and arrange for the transfer of these authorities to the new ministry.

[Al-'Urayfaj] How do you view the situation of Islamic missionary work in the world today?

[Al-Turki] The Islamic countries in the world are seeing great interest in the causes of Islam and Muslims. Islamic centers, associations, and organizations in different parts of the world are fulfilling their duties toward intensifying the true call to the religion of God the exalted, and toward the greater spread of Islamic knowledge.

The Foundation Exists

[Al-'Urayfaj] As your excellency the minister prepares to assume your new functions, are there priorities and strategies on which you will focus?

[Al-Turki] Such matters and priorities do not begin from zero. There is a program. The Kingdom is proceeding according to this program through: the general chairmanship of the departments of Academic Research, Religious Rulings, Missionary Work, and Guidance; the Pilgrimage Ministry, Islamic organizations; and the embassies abroad of the custodian of the two noble holy places. All of these agencies provide important services in the area of Islamic missionary work and activity. Therefore, no one working in one aspect of Islamic missionary work will begin from zero. The new Islamic Affairs Ministry will also help, God willing, to implement the state's plan, unify efforts, and cooperate with different governmental agencies in an atmosphere of full state support and sponsorship.

The Faithful Appreciate the Kingdom's Role

[Al-'Urayfaj] During your visits and official trips to a number of Islamic countries and lands, what was your perception of the feelings of leaders, Islamic activity, and Muslim peoples abroad toward the Kingdom and its leadership role?

[Al-Turki] The faithful who are concerned with Islam and the interests of Muslims appreciate the enormous amount of activity the Kingdom has assumed under the leadership of the custodian of the two noble holy places and his excellency the upright crown prince. Muslims convey the utmost appreciation and commendation and pray sincerely that God will protect the leader of this

nation, may God let him triumph, and preserve the security, stability, and prosperity of this precious country.

Those who are not concerned with Islam and snub the Kingdom's leadership role do not damage the Kingdom, because it is striving, thank God, to serve the Islamic call and spread Islam everywhere. However, the vast majority of Muslims are personally very grateful to the Kingdom and the custodian of the two noble holy places for his support of Muslims. They realize fully that this country has employed a great deal of money, effort, and time, so that the guests of the merciful will find comfort and repose in the pilgrimage seasons, which are seeing new increments year after year under the ongoing sponsorship and solicitude of the custodian of the two noble holy places and his excellency the upright crown prince, may God preserve them.

[Al-'Urayfaj] What do you say to all those who congratulate your excellency upon obtaining the precious royal trust?

[Al-Turki] I thank all their highnesses the royal princes, their eminences the ulema, their excellencies the ministers, officials, family, and colleagues. I hope to God, the great and almighty, that everyone will have a good opinion of me.

Snap Shots

- His Royal Highness, Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Prince of the Riyadh District, was the first to congratulate his excellency. His noble highness called him by telephone from his current residence in the city of Jeddah and wished His Excellency Dr. al-Turki success in his new responsibilities.
- His Royal Highness, Prince Faysal Bin-Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the general chairman of youth welfare, extended congratulations and good wishes to His Excellency Dr. al-Turki. His highness praised his excellency for his contributions in the area of Islamic missionary work.
- Minister al-Turki received word of the noble royal decree moments before the news of its promulgation was broadcast. On that night, he was at a ceremony held on the campus of al-Imam Muhammad Bin-Sa'ud Islamic University.
- His Excellency, Shaykh Dr. al-Turki will remain a member of the Board of Senior Ulema in addition to his new responsibilities.
- 'UKAZ was the first newspaper to congratulate his excellency. It conducted this interview with him at 0215 Sunday morning.

SUDAN

Al-Bashir Talks of Return to Civil Rule

93AF0763A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Aug 93 p 7

[Unattributed article: "Al-Bashir Talks About the Intention To Return to Civil Rule"]

[Text] Khartoum—AL-HAYAH. Sudanese President Lieutenant General Omar Al-Bashir informed the editors in chief of the local newspapers and the governmental media organizations yesterday that his government intends to hand over power to the people and return to "civil rule."

He said in his weekly meeting with them that there will be a regional parliament for each state of the nine states of the Sudan by the beginning of this June, which concurs with his anniversary of five years in power.

He explained that the membership of the regional parliaments will be partially by free elections, and he set April 1994 as the appointed time for the elections. Likewise, the remaining part of their membership will be added to by the conferences of the syndicalist and vocational sectors. And for that he set the coming November as a deadline, on the condition that this addition process be finished by the beginning of March 1994.

The Sudanese president said that the building of the political system (the people's conferences) will be finished on the district level in 1995. He mentioned that that will follow election of a president of the Republic by way of direct vote.

Indonesia Trade Agreement Renewed

93AE0762B Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH in Arabic 17 Jul 93 p 1

[Text] The trade agreement between Sudan and Indonesia was renewed for three additional years. The value of this agreement is \$150 million that includes importing and exporting between the two countries.

Mr. Nasr al-Din Muhammad 'Umar, General Manager of the al-Jizira Service Company "Lesona" said that there are continuous commercial trade activities between his company and the Indonesian company within the framework of bilateral cooperation. He also added that the two companies have agreed on the exportation of a number of local products including sesame seed with a value of \$10 million.

He added that the imported product within the framework of the renewed trade agreement between the two countries includes agricultural machinery, equipment for the ministry of irrigation, water pumps for the cities and Sundus agricultural product, and fertilizers valued at \$15 million for the current agricultural season, the first shipment of which has already arrived.

One Billion Pounds Allocated to Medicinal Drugs

93WE0534Z Khartoum AL-INQAZ AL-WATAN in Arabic 17 Jul 93 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Comprehensive Plan To Enhance Medical and Remedial Functions"]

[Text] Federal Minister of Health, Lieutenant General Galwak Deng, announced that the Ministry of Health has allocated more than 400 million pounds for the qualification of health organizations in the new year's budget. He informed AL-INQAZ AL-WATANI that his ministry endeavored to reduce the number of patients seeking treatment abroad by means of providing hospitals with the necessary equipment, instruments and medical specialists, the support of charitable institutions' work in the medical and remedial fields, and the promotion of protocols and investments with friendly and brotherly states for work and investment in the areas mentioned.

He added that 100,000 pounds were allocated for installation of immunization equipment in the provinces, 9 million pounds for the upgrade of midwifery schools throughout the country, 1.25 million pounds for medical immunologist specialist training, in addition to UNICEF's support of immunization, estimated at \$40,000.

The health minister said that more than 1 billion pounds were allocated for management of the provision of medicinal drugs, and called upon the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Sudan to facilitate the approval for medicines by way of the foreign currencies approved for such.

At the same time, Dr. Husayn 'Abd-al-Wahab, director of the pharmacology department, Ministry of Health, described the medicinal drug situation as adequate, and called upon concerned authorities to grant medicinal drugs the priority now accorded energy, fuel, means of production, and other vital elements within the foreign currency schedule in order to ensure the provision of medicines to citizens.

The health minister noted that medical personnel were redistributed in the effort to thoroughly cover all of Sudan's provinces. He said that percentages of personnel were raised from 67 percent to 76 percent in the Eastern Province, from 69 percent to 72 percent in the Northern Province, from 57 percent to 70 percent in Darfur, from 80 percent to 87 percent in the Central Province, and from 60 percent to 64 percent in Kurdufan.

The minister said that, in the context of comprehensive national planning, the ministry had established an ambitious plan to upgrade and develop the medical and remedial functions. A national medicinal drug factory, under the authority of Medical Provisions, will be established and supplied with the equipment and personnel necessary to manufacture medicines. This, in addition to the establishment of the Sudanese Pharmaceuticals Factory, for which the feasibility study has been completed, granted public authority for investment certification and registered and allotted a parcel of land.

He added that during the current year, the Sudanese Chinese Friendship Hospital, with 17 specialized units, will be established at Umm Durman, in addition to the

Turkish Hospital in Khartoum (al-Kalakilah), on which work will begin in the coming days.

Economic Planning Minister Interviewed

93AF0725A Doha L-SHARQ in Arabic 12 Jul 93 p 12

[Interview with Dr. Ibrahim 'Ubayd-Allah, economic professor, by Rashid 'Abd-al-Rahim; place and date not given]

[Text] The Sudanese economy is going through an important phase, one of strict implementation and application of the policies of economic liberalization, as well as international developments that have affected Sudan in achieving major strides in the economic field, particularly agriculture.

We took these questions and some articles of the 1993-94 budget to Dr. Ibrahim 'Ubayd-Allah, a professor of economy, a long-time economic practitioner, formerly a trade minister, and now minister of economic planning and investment in the new cabinet. We had the following interview with him:

['Abd-al-Rahim] There has been a noticeable drop in exports in the approved budget for this year. What are the reasons for this, and have new policies been worked out to deal with this situation?

['Ubayd-Allah] The economic science is the science of substitutes. No policy can be established in any country that could be flawless. We are facing numerous internal and external changes which we are seeking to overcome through policy amendments and making the appropriate decisions.

Trade and investment policies are influenced by the present credit policies, such as financing imports, which is affected by the existing policies of taxation, commodity subsidization, and the current rates of exchange.

We are facing the problem of developing the structures in the field of resources. We need to develop land and sea transportation, enhance capabilities of the port [not specified] and the handling of shipping in the port. The transport traffic was designed only for imports. Now there is an abundance of products and the export traffic has increased. We have faced infrastructure problems, particularly with regard to cold storage for the export of meat, vegetables, and fruits, which are in demand abroad.

With regard to policies, there have been some obstacles that have been dealt with, such as charges on exports, which exceeded 21 percent but which have now been reduced by 50 percent. The provinces used to levy charges for export transit, but we have removed that.

We now have a high-level committee that deals with export problems and is operating efficiently. We now export 100 commodities, while in the past we exported only 10 percent of that. The production cost of some of these commodities is high.

[Abd-al-Rahim] One of the goals of the policy of liberalizing the economy was to set one single rate of exchange for the Sudanese pound, but there are several rates today. Why is that so?

[Ubayd-Allah] This situation is due to several reasons, most important of which is that today's world trade and economy are not founded on an economic basis. The international regulations set up by international institutes for financing aim at assisting the countries that achieve good economic results and liberalize their economy. We in Sudan have liberalized our economy and realized a surplus in goods and a high rate of growth that is recognized internationally. Still, for non-economic reasons, we have been denied aid that is due to us. We as a developing country produce cheap goods in terms of international prices and buy goods and production materials at high prices. This is the reason for the scarcity of foreign currency.

Internally, not all of the sectors responded to the policy of economic liberalization. Some exporters do not present themselves as such overseas, and for this reason, we have been forced to impose restrictions on exports and have fixed minimum prices for a number of commodities in order to ensure we obtain the value of these commodities, because we have found that many commodities have been exported while the return has been small. We have laid down these policies to secure export revenues. The government is trying to obtain free currencies through sources other than the exporters. The exporters need a variety of rates, which leads to having a multiple of rates. We believe that to have more than the rate of exchange for the dollar is necessary despite some of its drawbacks. But this is imposed by reality.

[Abd-al-Rahim] Don't you think it is Sudan's policies that lead to all this?

[Ubayd-Allah] It is our right to adopt the policies we need within the context of international values, principles, and objectives. But what is happening in the world today is not an economic process. It is a political fight. We are members of numerous international institutes and shoulder our duty in full. We have achieved results that have been recognized by these institutes. But we are being fought with false accusations about human rights, refugees, and the war in the south.

Sudan has been receiving the largest number of refugees, and our human rights record is brilliant, governed by our Islamic religion. It has become clear to the whole world that the war in the south is being stirred by John Garang with help from foreign powers. Despite that, we are not receiving any aid. We are members of the Lome agreement, yet it has withheld \$500 million, which are supposed to finance exports. Before the revolution we used to export few goods, but today we export more than 100 articles. We have opened new markets, and our goods are competitive in the world markets.

[Abd-al-Rahim] Cotton is one of the important cash crops. Sudan is well-known for its good cotton production, but you have reduced its planting and turned toward rain irrigation. Cotton revenues have dropped to \$45 million, while it used to be double this figure.

[Ubayd-Allah] This is true to a large extent. Cotton is an important cash and food crop in Sudan, but there has been negligence in planting it.

The rate of exchange for cotton planters is very low, especially since it is a government crop since the government is the only cotton buyer. It offers the farmer a low price. This has led to negligent planting and the spread of pests.

Moreover, other countries have entered the world cotton market, which has led to a drop in its prices. When the revolution broke out we found that the crop for two years had not been marketed and was kept in storage. For this reason we switched to rain planting.

We now have a new cotton policy, which realizes the revolution's first slogan—to eat what we plant and live with what we manufacture. Our policy is to relieve the farmer of his burdens and to pay attention to the crop and to follow the world market so that we will plant the internationally desirable types of cotton, and to offer real prices.

[Abd-al-Rahim] Wheat production dropped too in comparison with last year.

[Ubayd-Allah] One of the problems we faced in wheat planting was, first, the high cost of production and the low productivity.

Second, the installments or step selling system for farmers experiment has produced a new reality. Discussions have taken place in the economic sector and in the National Assembly, as well as with farmers and the jurists. We have reached a new formula of installment in buying system. We have decided to give the farmer a part of the price for his products. The farmer must increase his productivity, because the government cannot subsidize both consumption and production.

[Abd-al-Rahim] What about the international commodities prices? It is said that competition among merchants has caused a drop in prices.

[Ubayd-Allah] International competition does not cause us a problem. Most of our exports have relative qualities, such as meat, skins, vegetables, fruits, and seeds. We have four kinds of sesame seeds, all of which are in demand. Yes, in certain cases the merchants cause a drop in our export prices. We need to obtain foreign currency. For this reason we have fixed minimum prices for commodities and have laid down new import policies that would lead to doubling profits for those who export then import. We ensure that they are compensated for their losses should there be any.

[Abd-al-Rahim] What have you done in order to promote exports and to develop them internationally?

[Ubayd-Allah] We have engaged in major moves and large-scale contacts. We have revived the International Khartoum Fair. This fair was suspended during the rule by parties. We have resumed activities in this fair and set up within it important fairs, such as the first Islamic trade fair and the Jordanian and Syrian fairs. And now we have the Lebanese fair. We are also preparing for the Chinese fair and the Indian fair for small industries.

We have tried to set up national fairs to coincide with these fairs and the results have been good. These fairs have led to developing our industry, particularly the shoe and ready-made clothes industries.

[Abd-al-Rahim] What have you prepared for the coming agricultural season?

[Ubayd-Allah] We have received it with major preparations, with fertilizers, oil, and the necessary financing, as well as a major study of pricing that will meet with the approval of the farmer. We want to underscore the revolution slogans through the coming season.

TUNISIA

Comparative Statistics on Foreign Aid Programs

93AF0787A Tunis CONJONCTURE in French
Jul 93 (Supplement)

[Special report by K. Krimi: "The Issues of External Resource Mobilization"]

[Text] The Tunisian Government has always viewed external financing as an indispensable resource supplementing national savings as a source of funds for the country's investment.

For the period covered by the Eighth Plan (1992-96), Tunisia's needs are an estimated 7,840 MD [million dinars], to be mobilized in the form of grants (MD28), direct investment (MD1,495), long-term credit (MD3,900), and medium-term credit (MD2,165).

Clearly, it will not be an easy task to secure a portfolio of that size. The era of generous foreign aid is no more.

Aware of competing demands from around the globe for foreign capital and external financial aid, the Tunisian Government faces a race against the clock to prevent these resources from moving elsewhere and to make conditions in Tunisia as attractive as possible to both individual investors and providers of foreign aid.

These are times that require vigilance and ingenuity.

Tunisia must pay close attention to the requirements and interests of the donor community. The ultimate goal is to tailor our assistance needs to the concerns of the donors.

With that goal in mind, the government recently organized two conferences aimed at sensitizing external aid leaders to the issues involved in foreign funding and in the strategy to be followed in order to continue to receive funding.

The first of these two conferences, held on 6 and 7 May, focused on the theme of "Financing the Eighth Plan (1992-96)." It brought together representatives of the donor community.

The second, held on 24 May, was a seminar on "the conditions and mechanisms for mobilizing external resources."

In the special report that follows, CONJONCTURE looks at the highlights, the revelations and the most important ideas raised at the two conferences, what is at stake in the upcoming revision of eligibility requirements for development assistance, and donor conditionality.

The Donors' Point of View

Tunisia's leading donors—the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the countries of the EEC, the African Development Bank (ADB), the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) and certain Arab countries—awarded high marks to the Tunisian government for its economic and financial policies, as they met in Tunis on 6 and 7 May 1993 to discuss the theme of "external financing of the Eighth Plan (1992-96)."

The participants at the conference unanimously paid tribute to the economic liberalization policy of President Ben Ali's government.

Under that policy, Tunisia has set in motion a far-reaching program involving privatization of public enterprises, an array of incentives for foreign investors, and budget austerity.

At the opening of the conference, Tunisia's prime minister, Mr. Hamed Karoui, stated that the Eighth Development Plan had set goals that require a total investment on the order of 23 billion dinars [D] or 25 percent of the country's gross national product (GNP) for each of the years covered by the plan, with half of that amount to come from the private sector.

But the national effort has fallen short of the required level of funding, the prime minister said. As a result, Tunisia must seek a "greater degree of international cooperation," namely in the form of long-term loans on preferential terms. Tunisia's minister of international cooperation and foreign investment, Mr. Mohamed Ghannouchi, would later announce that "Tunisia's foreign capital needs are estimated to be 8 billion dollars for the period 1992-96."

The cooperation minister pointed out that the major challenges facing Tunisia include "an unemployment rate of 15 percent and a level of indebtedness that is still

high." Nonetheless, he remarked, Tunisia is committed to keep to the path of reforms and budget austerity prescribed by the IMF.

Against poverty by emphasizing the financial viability of the social services system. [sentence as published]

Since the adoption of a free-market oriented adjustment program, Tunisia has received foreign financial resources totaling D3 billion, divided among the following categories: MD251 in grants; MD165 in shareholdings and investments; MD2,685 in long-term loans; and MD1,317 in medium-term loans.

New Issues in Development Assistance

Development assistance has begun to take on purposes other than development. Increasingly, it is becoming a strategic tool and is being used in support of diplomatic efforts to guarantee peace and freedom, to defend freedom and democracy around the world, and to foster closer links among free-market economies.

Development assistance has undergone a remarkable evolution in recent times. It is guided by new geopolitical considerations, as the following three examples attest.

The first is the effort agreed to during the Gulf War to reduce the debts of Egypt and Turkey.

The second is the example of Poland, which had never received development assistance.

Third, a democratization process was launched in Mongolia in 1991; during the same year, development assistance was suspended [and] the same year, development assistance to Haiti was suspended following a coup d'etat that was condemned as undemocratic.

In light of these changes in the world, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD (an organization of the 22 leading industrialized nations of the West) is currently attempting to define the criteria that make countries eligible for development assistance. The DAC has already had to revise the list of countries eligible to receive assistance on preferential terms. Under the new guidelines, Tunisia is ranked among the intermediate income countries, ahead of the less developed countries (LDCs). The new eligibility criteria for development assistance take into consideration efforts to reduce military spending, respect for human rights, and environmental protection.

These new conditions work very much in Tunisia's favor. Tunisia's social and economic policy choices are perfectly in line with the eligibility criteria which will be adopted at the OECD summit in 1993.

In addition, the Tunisian government has won approval for relending arrangements with certain countries (Sweden, Holland) to finance environmental protection projects.

Nevertheless, Tunisia will have to confront three challenges:

First, Tunisia could become a victim of its own success in that it may lose public assistance money because of its positive economic performance.

Second, the gap between the finite volume of development assistance available to developing countries and the enormous financial needs of the less developed countries places Tunisia in an uncomfortable position in seeking aid, again because of its positive economic performance.

Third, Tunisia runs the risk of being hurt by tied aid—aid not suited to the requirements of the country's social and economic development.

To address these challenges, Tunisia must formulate a strategy to heighten awareness, with the goal of achieving a more effective mobilization of financial resources and a better credit package in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

Efforts to raise awareness should be conducted at both the political and technical levels. At the political level, they could be carried out in the following settings:

- during visits by high-level dignitaries;
- among legislators who belong to interparliamentary associations or bilateral economic committees; (In effect, the task is to create a lobby for Tunisia.)
- in the business community (employers, professional federations, and multinational companies). It would be a mistake to overlook the business community, which is capable of maintaining steady pressure on and persuading the most influential of people, when their interests are at stake.

In lobbying to increase awareness, special attention must be paid to the views of the diplomatic community in Tunis. A head of mission has the authority to block an aid request that he considers inopportune.

At the technical level, Tunisia must professional in its approach and remain closely informed of donor interests.

"Toward that end, close attention should be paid to statements by members of government on official visits, in particular to statements by the representatives of countries that belong to the OECD's DAC at G-7 meetings and at the annual gatherings of the World Bank and the IMF, and to recommendations issued at these gatherings, especially those which urge public and private institutions to offer the most favorable terms in support of countries like Tunisia which are in the process of instituting structural reforms."

In short, a meticulous and technically well-prepared effort is necessary. The idea is to present more than just a feasibility study, even if it is one that guarantees great success, as most often the economic argument does not

suffice. Tunisians must use imaginative thinking and offer an "added edge" in line with the aid policy of the donor country.

The Ground Rules of an Awareness Campaign

The effort to heighten awareness must not be limited to making Tunisia eligible for development assistance or to obtaining export credits on the most generous of terms (in foreign currencies). The task is to innovate, to offer a special edge by reflecting on how to prevent a loss of ground and how to make our partners more aware so as to ensure a sustained trend in development assistance in Tunisia's favor.

The Goals

- To tailor cooperation to the cooperation requirements of both countries
- To make use of existing aid mechanisms and suggest new ideas

In concrete terms, Tunisian officials must do the following:

- diversify the types of governmental loans under the heading of financial cooperation, particularly in view of the fact that some of Tunisia's partners are beginning to turn away from aid that they view as nonstructuring (merchandise loans);
- look to other loans that can replace program aid and that offer the same advantages; in other words, the rapid disbursement necessary to the pursuit of economic policy. Such loans include sector loans that are used to procure equipment and supplies needed in a given sector, and development loans provided by the financial institutions of developing countries. These loans, which are more advantageous in their terms than export credits, can effectively compensate for program aid or "merchandise aid" to the extent that they are used to finance purchases of goods and services.
- attempt to reduce the exchange risk and seek specific measures for a refund in the form of a relending arrangement or an expansion of technical assistance.

Indeed, certain cooperation agencies offer integrated cooperation in pilot projects. Our partners tend to award public funding more quickly for projects that have previously benefitted from technical assistance, for example in the drafting of a project evaluation or feasibility study.

As a consequence, an attempt must be made to coordinate technical assistance and financial assistance so that development projects can be more readily realized as part of development assistance.

Banks Assume Management of Program Aid

Program aid, also referred to as balance-of-payments support or an import program, involves loans and subsidies to purchase goods and services abroad, usually from the lending country.

Who Manages Program Aid

In Tunisia, it is the Central Bank of Tunisia (BCT) that manages program aid, and there are three main reasons for this:

The BCT does not charge a management fee, because program aid granted to the State or guaranteed by it.

The BCT is the depository for the Tunisian Treasury's account and is authorized to debit that account.

From the donors' perspective, the BCT offers a greater guarantee and security.

The Problems

This method of management has not always worked well. At times, it has produced blockages arising from external and internal factors. The external factors can be seen in the following:

- relatively long delays in obtaining lender approval of commercial contracts, at times causing the supplier or importer to lose interest in pursuing a deal;
- the reluctance of certain suppliers (in Italy) to work with lines of credit that require the presentation of certain official documents (anti-Mafia affidavit);
- the generally high cost of financing due to fluctuating exchange rates.

The following are examples of internal problems:

- the large number of parties involved (the BCT, other banks, the OCT [Tunisian Trade Office], the foreign affairs ministry, the ministry of planning and regional development, the finance ministry, etc.);
- the lack of clear and detailed information for operators, which has led to the recent initiative to publish the availability of lines of credit in the press;
- unattractive conditions of retrocession. Expansion of the field of activity authorized by the importation certificate.

The Problems

To address these difficulties, the government decided to give more responsibility to the commercial banks, in the absence of a Tunisian bank specialized in foreign trade.

The commercial banks are now authorized to contract foreign credit. It is therefore natural that they would assume the management responsibilities not only for program aid, but for all external resources.

Initially, the Central Bank is to provide assistance, but its role will eventually be limited to monitoring the status of foreign credit resources.

It should be noted, however, that the cost to the final operator is likely to be higher (additional bank fees, particularly due to fluctuations of currency exchange rates). But the advantage is that the cost will more

accurately reflect market conditions. The government is relying on competition among banks to bring the cost down.

Conditional Support From the World Bank

The World Bank has slated a total of 1.3 billion dollars in financial assistance to Tunisia for the projects envisioned in the Eighth Plan (1992-96).

Its loan program will include, on average, four investment projects per year, representing some 250 million dollars yearly. About 45 percent of that amount will provide support to private sector activities in agriculture, industry, finance, and other services; 38 percent will go toward basic infrastructure and the environment; and 17 percent will be devoted to education and training.

Separately, the World Bank intends to conduct macro-economic and sector studies during the period covered by the Eighth Plan.

The World Bank, which has granted no less than 3 billion dollars in financing to Tunisia to date, has decided to attach two major conditions to these loans:

- Tunisia must continue to enjoy the confidence of the international community.
- The process of anchoring the Tunisian economy in free-market reforms must be speeded up.

With the agreement of the Tunisian economy, the World Bank's strategy in Tunisia over the next five years will revolve around five main concerns:

Expansion of the Private Sector. The goal is to enable the private sector to play a leading role in an outward-looking economy.

Restructuring the Public Sector. The objective is to adapt the public sector to a new environment and to transform its responsibilities toward the private sector. Plainly stated, the public sector institutions are being asked to abandon the role of oversight agencies and become support agencies.

Maintaining priority on the effort to reduce [text missing] protection is a better management of the country's fragile natural resources and the environment.

The integration of the Tunisian economy in world markets.

Status of Bilateral Program Aid as of 16 April 1993

Lender	Loan Amount	End Date for Charges	Amount Charged	Amount Disbursed	Remainder	Amount Paid to Treasury (in TND)
France (in millions of French francs [Fr])						
COFACE ¹ 21	290.00	31 Dec 91	280.00	276.30		
COFACE 22	210.00	30 Jun 92	210.00	202.10	7.90	3,506,936.720
COFACE 22a	40.00	30 Jun 93	40.00	37.50	2.50	5,682,107.647
COFACE 23	200.00	31 Mar 93	200.00	10.70	189.30	
Italy (in millions of U.S.\$)						
1988 Prog.	25.00		25.00	25.00	0	
(125 million)	30.00		30.00	30.00	0	12,533,509.002
	30.00		30.00	30.00	0	
	40.00		40.00	40.00		
Small Business Prog.	50.00		12.00	6.20	43.80	
(in billions of Italian lira [L])						
Special Prog.	50.00		L23.50	L23.00	L27.00	
Spain (in millions of U.S.\$)						
Program Aid 86	15.00	6 Jun 93	11.50	10.65	4.35	150,000.000
Switzerland (in millions of Swiss francs)						
Program 86	60.00	17 Sep 93	22.60	16.60	43.40	509,626.966
Belgium (in millions of Belgian francs [BF])						
Grant 86						
Grant 91	200.00		200.00	200.00		4,438,888.820

Status of Bilateral Program Aid as of 16 April 1993 (Continued)

Lender	Loan Amount	End Date for Charges	Amount Charged	Amount Disbursed	Remainder	Amount Paid to Treasury (in TND)
Grant 92	100.00				100.00	
Sweden (in millions of U.S.\$)						
Program Aid	15.00	30 Dec 92	11.20	8.00	6.92	237,596.050
United States (in millions of U.S.\$)						
GSM ²	50.00	30 Sep 93	12.18		50.00	

¹ French Foreign Trade Insurance Company

² [expansion not given]

Source: The Central Bank

Multilateral Program Aid as of 16 April 1993

Lender	Loan Amount	Expiration Date	Amount Accounted For	Remainder	Amount Disbursed	Remainder	Paid To Treasury (in TND)
World Bank (in millions of U.S. dollars)							
PERL ¹	130.00		108.20	21.80	110.00	20.00	79,830,507.199
ASAL ² II	50.00	31 Dec 94	50.00	0	50.00	0	41,320,259.924
PAREF ³	250.00		100.00	150.00	100.00	150.00	86,237,171.630
African Development Bank	(in millions of UA ⁴)						
Structural Adjustment	75.00		75.00	0	72.00	3.00	79,238,777.027
ASAL	90.00	31 Dec 93	34.00	55.50	34.50	55.5	30,316,629.581
Germany	(in millions of German marks)						
ASAL II	48.7	31 Dec 93	48.7	0	45.30	3.40	26,528,178.864
PAREF	10.00	31 Dec 94	5.00	10.00	5.00	5.00	3,020,000.000
EEC (in millions of ECUs ⁵)							
PAREF	40.00	31 Dec 95	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	22,766,017.769

¹ Public Enterprise Restructuring Loan

² Agricultural Structural Adjustment Loan

³ Financial Restructuring and Adjustment Program

⁴ Unit of Account

⁵ European Currency Units

Source: The Central Bank

Breakdown of Grants by Type
(in millions of dinars)

Type	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Cash grant	1	4	67	64	1
Grants in kind	28	86	128	120	28
a) dairy products	(8)	(7)	(8)	(6)	(8)
b) grains	(11)	(41)	(39)	(41)	(11)
Total	29	90	195	184	29

Line-of-Credit Components of Program Aid to Tunisia

Country	Amount	Interest Rate	Repayment Period	Purpose	Managing Institutions	Remarks
Belgium	BF100 million (second tranche)			goods and services	BCT and Tunisian commercial banks/AGCD ¹ .	nonrepayable subsidy
Spain	BVS ² 15 million	2%	20 years, inc. 5-yr. grace period	goods and services	BCT and Tunisian banks/ICO ³ .	
France	Fr500 million (in 3 tranches)-50% to 1.5%	33 years, inc. 10-yr. grace period	goods and services	BCT and Tunisian commercial banks/UTB/BNP ⁴ .		
	Fr200 million	-50% OECD consensus	OECD terms (5-8 years)			1992-93
	Fr150 million					1993-94
	Fr150 million					1994-95
Italy	\$125 million	1.75%	20 years, inc. 5-yr. grace period	goods and services	BCT/Mediocredito	

¹. [expansion not given]². General Administration for Cooperation and Development³. Islamic Conference Organization⁴. [expansion not given]/National Bank of Paris

Source: Central Bank

[Box, pp 3-4]

How External Resources Are Mobilized

The mechanisms through which external resources are mobilized are specific and variable.

They are specific because of the following:

- uncertainties (unpredictable or hypothetical scenarios);
- complexity (dual bureaucracy);
- adaptability (regulation, opportunities); and
- diversity of the projects and programs to be carried out, the nature of financing (loans, grants, direct investment), sources of financing (bilateral, multilateral), forms of financing (project aid, program aid, lines of credit, partnerships, technical assistance, food aid).

There are two stages leading up to the utilization of external resources: the preagreement stage (mobilization) and the postagreement stage (disbursement).

During the mobilization stage, there are procedures to be followed in each of the following six phases:

- prospecting: identifying lenders and gathering data
- preparation: applications, inquiries, studies
- evaluation: assessment of the proposed program
- negotiation of financial agreements (loans, grants, etc.) by financial specialists, technical experts, and legal specialists
- finalization of agreements at meetings of joint committees

- entry into force (technical and legal conditions).

[Box, p 8]

Capital Flows in 1991

As an illustration, we offer the following overview of a few capital flows that occurred in 1991. We have chosen to focus on grants because of their direct relationship with development assistance.

For Tunisia, 1991 was a year free of the serious natural disasters such as the harsh droughts, which the country has known in the past. The favorable climatic conditions of 1991 gave rise to record levels of production. As a result, foreign grants fell to D6 million from about 41 million in 1990. Similarly, dairy grants fell to D2 million, from 6 million the previous year.

The same trend occurred in cash grants, which were reduced from D64 to D31 million in the same period of time. It is to be noted that, because of our relative level of economic development, **Tunisia has not been included, for the past several years, in the list of countries eligible for massive aid and financial assistance on preferential terms.**

At present, only the EEC and a few friendly countries continue to make substantial cash grants to Tunisia. From a value of D30 million in 1990, foreign technical assistance received by Tunisia (at no cost) rose to a value of 33 million dinars in 1991. Such assistance is multidimensional and it meets a range of needs for technical services, primarily in the scientific and cultural fields, without any outflow of foreign exchange earnings.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Al-Fadli To Be Tried for Instigating Terrorism

93LH0012Z London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Jul 93
p 1,4

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Haydari]

[Text] Sanaa—Jarallah 'Umar [al-Kuhali], the new Yemeni minister of culture and one of the most prominent leaders of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], has put a stop to rumors that he has refused to assume his cabinet portfolio yesterday and be sworn in before Yemeni President Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

'Umar Jarallah was the last minister to be sworn in the new government, which was formed on 30 May under Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas.

When the government was formed the minister of culture was in the United States. He then took a vacation in Paris, Beirut, and Damascus before returning to Sanaa three days ago.

AL-HAYAH and Reuter report from Aden that 'Ali al-Muhsin, chief of public prosecution in Abyan province, east of the capital, announced that the prosecution has completed procedures for the trial of 42 defendants headed by Shaykh Tariq Bin-Nasir al-Fadli who surrendered to three deputies from Abyan after the government forces encircled his mountain bastion last January.

Security sources in Aden said al-Fadli is accused in the case of the attempt to assassinate 'Ali Salih 'Abbad (Muqbil), member of the YSP Political Bureau and in charge of the party in Abyan province, and of being behind the bombing of two hotels in the port of Aden.

Al-Muhsin said that al-Fadli and the rest of the defendants are facing two charges: The first is terrorism and systematic activity to commit crimes, and the second is trying to create a terrorist organization to operate inside and outside the country in violation of the penal code.

Two Islamist extremists were arrested in connection with the attempt to assassinate Muqbil who was wounded. With the exception of these two, the remainder of the 42 suspects are still at large, while al-Fadli is under house arrest in Sanaa. His relatives have asked that he be released.

New Government Sets Program, Priorities

93LH0012A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Jul 93 p 4

[Text] Sanaa—The Yemeni Government's statement, which the Chamber of Deputies began debating two days ago, stressed that the coalition between the General People's Congress [GPC], the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], and the Yemeni Reform Assembly [YRA] was the result of adopting a democratic trend, the peaceful transfer of power, and the desire to consolidate national unity. It does not mean that it is a new form of [power]

sharing. While the statement, consisting of six chapters dealing with basic structure, the economic and financial situation, planning and development, development of productive services, and of social and cultural services, constitutes a construction and reform program, which the transitional government has approved, is a serious attempt at realistic identification [of problems] and dealing with them in a comprehensive manner. Its aim is to forge ahead on the path of building the state, developing the economy, and combating corruption. The statement said "The parties' election programs will remain to be the coalition government's guide and will benefit from them in implementing its programs and make determined efforts to accomplish everything that is positive."

The Chamber of Deputies has set up a committee from its members and representatives from the government to study the statement and submit a report on it in order to endorse it and give the government a vote of confidence on its basis. The statement said that the past three years were not enough to overcome the aggravating problems, "which the unity regime inherited from the eras when the country was divided politically, economically, administratively, and in security fields."

The statement said the problems that the country faced in the political field were due to the newness of the political and democratic experiment and the multiparty system. This has cast shadows on the political scene, leading to the commitment of negative actions that were a throwback from the past political relations. Nevertheless, numerous achievements and practical steps have been realized despite certain disruptions and political differences that were often at the expense of the citizens' urgent concerns and the problems of their daily life.

The government's statement regarded the security disturbances that the country experienced in the past were due to the duality of the security branch as a result of which the entire security was endangered. This has prompted the state to take certain measures to enhance security and to control the situation. This has also enabled creating the conditions necessary to hold public elections and the legislative authority to assume its powers, the authority that is the real beginning to consolidating constitutional legality and enabling Yemen to face all the challenges and problems.

Prime Minister Engr. Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas informed the Chamber of Deputies that the coalition government has sought to lay down its program on a realistic, practical basis close to the national objectives. He considered cooperation between the legislative and the executive authorities as capable of playing an effective and fruitful role for the achievement of our objectives in raising our people's standard of living and realizing stability and security for all the citizens through progress, prosperity, comprehensive development, and building the states of law and order, the state of institutions. Al-'Attas expressed his government's readiness, after the vote of confidence is won, to accept any

constructive criticism aimed at rectifying aberrations or mistakes that may prevent it from achieving its objectives and the immediate tasks that the program listed as follows:

1. Strengthening the democratic, consultative system based on political and party pluralism and the peaceful assumption of power; establishing sound democratic practices; resisting any practices that are against the democratic system, or attempts to evade or curb its progress; respecting public freedoms and human rights; strengthening national unity; and building and bolstering the basis of modern Yemen, the state of constitutional institutes.

2. Symbolizing the principles of independence, integrity, and efficiency of the judiciary; ensuring the establishment of justice and fairness; executing judgments, modernizing litigation methods, and rectifying the judiciary's financial and administrative situation; and completing the setting up of courts throughout the country.

3. Completing the unification legislation and integrating the rest of the institutes and bodies in order to remove the effects of partitioning; executing the republic's administrative division on scientific basis and criteria in a manner that would remove the effects of partitioning; bolstering national unity; holding local council elections; and gradually implementing administrative and financial decentralization.

4. Launching several administrative and financial reforms aimed at achieving administrative and financial discipline; establishing the principle of reward and punishment; doing away with financial and administrative corruption; regaining the citizen's trust in the state machinery; activating the control and follow up machinery; improving performance; and strengthening the bodies responsible for planning, statistics, competence, and affiance.

5. Gradually pursuing an economic policy based on the principle of free market by relying on legitimate competition between the diverse economic activities; on sovereignty and respect for private, public, cooperative, and mixed property; avoiding monopolies and trickery; reviewing the financial and monetary policy with the aim of curbing inflation and the rise in prices; bolstering the position of the national currency; encouraging local and foreign investments in productive fields in particular; protecting local products; combating smuggling; granting concessions, facilities, and incentives to encourage agricultural and fish production; bolstering industries based on raw materials; building houses for people with limited income; continuing exploration for oil and minerals; developing the discovered oil and gas fields; promoting small business and domestic industries in order to create job opportunities; and using the appropriate technology.

6. Seeking the realization of the principle of justice in the distribution of service projects in all the republic's areas; giving priority to remote and needy areas; helping the citizens in providing pure potable water; and seeking to boost the efficiency of the service institutes and utilities.

7. Adopting the rule of "voluntary" [al-iradi] and direct general planning of all development tasks assigned to the government within the context of its new economic duty; the rule of index planning of development activity of the public sector; and the standardization of statistics, data system, and methods of follow up and evaluation.

8. Formulating a clear policy for the utilization of the state lands and properties; compiling, documenting, organizing, and determining their ownership by a single administration; and considering common lands as state property, with the exception of lands belonging to religious endowments or private lands that are legitimately and legally documented; and enacting laws and regulations for lands and urban planning.

9. Completing the final and satisfactory settlement of the question of housing and nationalized estates and agricultural lands on the basis of fair compensation, or returning the estate or the land [to its owners], depending on circumstances and in a manner that would ensure stability, mutual agreement, and social peace in accordance with the issued decisions.

10. Paying attention to the safety of the environment and preparing the draft laws necessary for this purpose.

11. Completing the unification of security and military organs; rectifying their situation in a manner that will achieve stability and security for the citizen and for the country; apprehending the outlaws who were the cause of disturbing security and stability; treating fairly those who belong to these organs with regard to their material and moral rights; and following objective standards in the matter of promotions and allowances; doing away with financial and administrative corruption in these two institutes; applying the principle of equal opportunities among all the people's children to join military schools and colleges; and strictly and urgently implement the law on parties that applies to members of the armed forces and security; and enhancing the comprehensive concept of security and military discipline.

12. Pursuing a foreign policy that would strengthen Yemen's regional, Arab, Islamic, and international role; giving priority to establishing special ties to countries of the Arabian peninsula on the basis of confidence, constructive cooperation, and strengthening of joint interests with all the Arab countries for the well-being, benefit, and bolstering of Arab and Islamic solidarity and developing cooperative relations with the countries and with regional and international organizations.

IRAN

Iraq Calls Iranian Pronouncements on Kurds Falsehood

93LA0098A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
10 Jun 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Iranian Regime Between False Concerns and Genuine Terror"]

[Text] The Iranian regime exposed itself to ridicule and embarrassment when it professed spurious concern for the rights of the Kurdish minority in the area and claimed to be prompted by the desire to preserve Iraq's unity at the close of the foreign ministers meeting it hosted, which included Iran, Turkey, and Syria.

That the communique issued at the close of the Tehran meeting makes claims not grounded in facts is clear to anyone who is familiar with the past doings of this regime and studied its acts of aggression during ten years of warfare and naked interference with Iraq's internal affairs. The behavior of this regime and the signals it is giving reveals persistent enmity toward Iraq, increased attempts to undermine it, and plotting against it. This hostile regime, not content with waging a direct and vicious war of aggression against Iraq for eight years, and harboring a handful of plotters in order to stir up trouble and engage in deliberate and willful acts of destruction, went so far as to embroil itself in America's designs. It sank tens of thousands of its earnings in treacherous and destructive operations aimed at realizing the goals America sought in vain to achieve through direct military involvement by 30 nations.

It is a matter of wonder and scorn that this doddering regime should have the audacity to bemoan the fate of what it called democracy in Iraq, when in point of fact it is this very regime which is the most antagonistic toward democracy and inured to it. Judging by the way it openly hunts down Iranians and deprives them of their most elementary human rights, it is plain for all to see that this regime's claims to safeguarding democracy run counter to the truth. The regime also falsely claims that the Iranian national forces are allowed to enjoy what it called natural rights in the process of building the nation and living in peace in its fold, when its conduct is based precisely on the premise that these forces are to be eliminated. Even religious personalities were involved in this power struggle, in particular the mullahs, among them who were at odds with the power brokers in Tehran.

As for its claims that it is mindful of the rights of the Kurdish minority, as was stated in the communique, its actions—which continue to this day—belie such claims. Those actions range from expulsions of Iranian Kurds outside their borders to their elimination abroad, as happened to the Iranian Kurdish leader Qasemlo who was slain by agents of the regime. What happened to this leader happened to tens of other Kurdish fighters. Elimination and repression were and are among the

basic trademarks of the organizations that took power in Iran in the past and still are the most outstanding features of the mullahs' regime today, based as they are on the most flagrant racial discrimination. How are we expected to believe there is concern for the rights of Iranian Kurds in view of the battle waged against them, as well as against Kurds in neighboring countries, particularly Iraqi Kurds? Those are now being slaughtered in villages bordering the frontier by Iranian artillery fire and murderous Iranian air raids targetting fleeing Iranian Kurds opposed to the regime. How does eliminating them uphold their rights? And does spilling the blood of the Iranian people help build democracy?

A regime which is inimical to its own people can hardly wax eloquent about any subject, other than its hostility toward other nations. Such a course of action is easy to understand, coming from the rulers of Tehran who are playing a little game that no longer fools anyone. Even the claim that there exists a radical faction headed by Khamene'i, and a more moderate one represented by Rafsanjani has come unstuck, because all factions, regardless of their composition, meet on common grounds from which radiate hatred for the nations of the region, greed for their wealth, and the desire to expand at their expense. This keeps the region in a state of insecurity, bereft of stability, and such a goal only serves the interests of imperialism and Zionism. It was therefore logical that this regime would align itself with the American aggressor. That it would claim otherwise is a foregone conclusion, as this is part and parcel of deceit, and the championing of the Greater Satan comes under the heading of a highwire act (and it has now been exposed) for the Iranians and all the other nations of the region. The regime has been playing a definite role—since it came into power—in keeping the countries in the area weak, threatened, and reluctant to take a stand and implement policies that protect their freedom of action and keep their wealth out of the grasping clutches of colonialist powers.

Attacks on Opposition Publications Described

93LA0099A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
27 Jun 93 pp 44-45

[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi]

[Text] The expression, "the educated religious," might not mean anything significant to the Arab reader who does not think it strange for the religious to be educated or strange for them to be uneducated. But the term itself in Persian means many things. For no sooner do you mention the expression, "Roshanfekr-e Mazhabi," than the meaning starts to provoke interest and questioning mixed with dismay!

How? And why? The story follows below.

On 14 May, a group composed of about 100 youth driving motorcycles wound their way to downtown Tehran where the Qa'emmaqam Farahani neighborhood is located. And in one of the side streets, they stopped in

front of the KIAN magazine headquarters, which is located on the ground floor of a four-story building. No sooner had they all assembled than they started to shout "Marg Bar Kian" or Death to Kian. And after a few moments, a band of them came forward and burst through the outside door of the building and reached the door of the apartment that houses the headquarters. They broke into it easily, then rushed inside the apartment, smashed all of the glass and furniture in it, then quickly left the magazine's headquarters.

The magazine's editor-in-chief, Mahmoud Shamsoldin, had received a threat the previous day that he and his associates would receive deserving punishment. But, he did not take the threat seriously, and he went to his workplace on Friday as usual until he was confronted by the spectacle, a sight that his eyes could not believe.

He, the managing editor Reza Shahrani, and members of the editorial staff, know the reason why the magazine was attacked. They realize at the same time that their educational project is fundamentally a "huge risk" in the present Iranian atmosphere, where the most important thing they are accused of is being of that sort that provokes the "Roshanfekr-e Mazhabi" controversy. And because they are, their risk remains surrounded with dangers in that it, quite simply, swims against the current!

A Call for an Apology to Bazargan

The incident that led to the break-in of the magazine and the destruction of its glass and furniture is as follows:

On 1 May—two weeks before the event—the monthly issue of the magazine was published and, on its cover, was a large picture of the engineer Mehdi Bazargan, the prominent opposition member, head of the "Freedom Movement," and the first head of the government after the success of the Islamic Revolution. And in a corner of the cover was a title saying: Bazargan speaks about his experience and his views on contemporary religious thought.

Inside, the magazine published a ten-page text of a well-attended dialogue that the editorial board of the magazine held with the opposition leader. The dialogue was replete with frank, open criticism of the existing system. Indeed, the manner that the man displayed was not lacking in provocation.

The magazine presented Bazargan as one of the symbols of religious and intellectual enlightenment in contemporary Iranian history. And it described his life as "a testimony filled with social values that will remain clear on his record forever." Then, it said that any equitable assessment of the course of the last half century of Iranian history cannot forget or ignore what Bazargan offered to Iran and to Islam.

The editor of the magazine, in his presentation of the dialogue, added: The time has come for some comments from the generation of young people who attacked the

line of the engineer Bazargan. And after the stage of agitation abates in their lives and a lot of ambiguous views become clear for them, they will offer him an apology for the damage and misunderstanding or misassumption that they inflicted on him.

This call for the apology to the man came at the introduction of the long dialogue that was held with him. This surprising development provoked dismay, especially since it originated from a group of educated people whose allegiance to the Islamic Revolution is not doubted. However, Bazargan's talk carried with it other surprises.

When he was asked about the conditions of the reform of religious thought, he defined four points. In the first of them, he said that it is necessary that it be independent and free, far from fanaticism and flattery and subjection.

In the second, he said that it must not permit the monopoly of religious opinion on the part of a group of scholars or shaykhs. For the nation calls for the following of what God and His Prophet said and not what a group of theologians says.

The third condition is that the nation return to itself and continue holding to its roots and its identity. And the fourth condition is that it return to the Qur'an, which protects it from every corruption in the world and in the hereafter.

When asked about his view of the future, and about the progress of religious thought in Iran, he expressed pessimism. He said that the picture that people see in Iran gives a negative impression of religion because the hopes of reform, which were dependent upon the new situation "having in view the government of the Islamic Revolution," have been scattered one by one. This makes a lot of believers doubt their faith and turn away from religious commitment, because they realize that religion came for the sake of worldly reform, but this reform has not been accomplished. On this point, he added:

The situation of the Iranian people and many of the Muslims of the world is like the situation of those who have lost their way in the world and in the hereafter.

For the frustrations that they are facing in the real world, in the fields of politics, economics, and warfare, have almost caused them to lose trust in themselves and in God. And this situation imposes great challenges on the religious "Islamic" thinkers who have the duty to face these challenges for the sake of battling current corruption and returning trust to the people in the present and the future, and in the world and the hereafter. When these words from engineer Bazargan were published, a violent reaction occurred in the circles of the Iranian elite who have not liked him since the Revolution began. The most powerful political reaction was what originated from Ali Khamene'i, the Spiritual Leader of the Revolution who alluded, in a word that he spoke, to the fact that there are those who have said that the Iranian people have lost the world and the hereafter. After

having enumerated the achievements accomplished by the Revolution, he said that those who utter this talk are bankrupt and are losers in the world and the hereafter. At the same time, the newspaper KAYHAN launched a powerful attack against KIAN and called for revocation of their license and for closing them down.

However, there are other waves of anger and argumentation that were bursting underneath the surface, especially among some of the sectors of young people, among whom are those that divorce themselves from the Hizbollah, most of whom are among those who killed on the battlefield against Iraq for many years, and whose consciousness and general awareness was formed in response to the slogans of the first years of the Revolution. Some of them were among those who were provoked two weeks later and attacked the office of KIAN magazine, which has aroused continuous controversy since its inception a year and a half ago.

Fourth Magazine To Be Attacked

The attack against KIAN was not the first of its kind. Rather, it is the fourth during the period after the death of the Imam Khomeyni, a period which has witnessed an increase in the number of newspapers published, and during which these same newspapers have started to criticize, in different ways and to varying degrees, the Iranian reality. According to statistics of the ministry of information, there are now 420 periodicals in Iran—42 percent are connected to the state in various ways, and 58 percent belong to the private sector. Among these periodicals are 19 private daily newspapers, "owned by individuals or independent groups," national and regional.

The publishing of these large numbers of publications on the side affords broader dialogue and criticism. The monthly magazine FARAD, which specializes in computers, came out with a picture of a soccer player, and cut his head and placed the head and the turban of the Imam Khomeyni in its place. This aroused the disapproval of many and led to the outburst of some young people, their attack on the magazine site, and the destruction of its contents. Those who were responsible were brought to trial for the action. As a result, the person who designed the picture was imprisoned for a period of two years, while the magazine's managing editor was jailed for one week.

After that, the bi-weekly magazine FARAD came out with a picture on the cover about the subject of emigrants from Iran, revealing to the readers that the Iranian people were determined to emigrate abroad, an expression of their discontent with the present circumstances. The picture was considered a slander of the system. Therefore, the revolutionary court issued a decision to seize the magazine. And when the decision was appealed before a regular court, the jurors ruled for acquittal of those at the head of the magazine and permitted them to return to publishing after an interruption of 14 months.

The third time, the magazine DONYA-YE SOKHAN, i.e., "WORLD OF SPEECH", which represents the Iranian elite, came out with a study of the negative effects that the revolutionary slogans, "the resounding expressions and pictures of martyrs," caused on hospital occupants. Some of the young people objected to the magazine's position. So, they attacked its headquarters and destroyed it, which led to its suspension for a period of three months. But, the minister of information met with its editors and offered them financial support for repairing the damage that befell the magazine, which afterwards enabled them to return to publishing.

Nevertheless, the case of KIAN magazine is of a different type. For the previous examples of criticism were counted as being from outside the ranks of the Islamic Revolution, whereas KIAN is publishing from under what can be interpreted as a "cloak" of the Revolution. Other magazines mentioned were run by persons or groups whose interests conflict with the Revolution, but KIAN speaks in the name of "the educated religious" trend, who want to set the path of the Revolution right in order for it to become more open and more democratic and free. For that reason, the message of the magazine in its totality flows in that direction.

Religious Democratic Government

If the dialogue with engineer Bazargan was equivalent to a welcoming of him and a welcoming of openness towards his views, then the 1 May issue also included an article not at all insignificant, entitled "Religious Democratic Government." The author of the article is a prominent professor of philosophy at the University of Tehran, Dr. Abdol Karim Soroushi. He represents a special phenomenon in Teheran that is polarizing an increasing number of the educated youth. He is counted among the main elements of the "Roshanfekr-e Mazhabi" movement.

In his article, Dr. Soroushi said that the religious government should be basically humane because religion cannot be inhumane, and if government is not humane, it lays the groundwork for an encounter with democracy.

These words of Dr. Soroushi are repeated frequently in his classes, which are held after the sunset prayer every Thursday and are attended by devoted young people. They circle around him wherever he goes. They were around him when he recited his lessons in one of the mosques of north Tehran. And they went behind him after he was banned from that mosque and proceeded to preach his lessons in the south of the capital, defending freedom and democracy and explaining his interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and his understanding of religion, which he says descended in order to prevent the transformation of people into gods.

The trend that KIAN magazine represents and that Dr. Soroushi gives expression to arouses anxiety, not only because it adopts a liberal stance—in the universal sense—but also because it is issuing from and shaped from outside the religious group or establishment. The

figures in the religious establishment consider the message of "the educated religious," who attack their rightness and their authority, alien. The "educated religious" compete with them and snatch the lights and the crowd away from them.

Because of the role that Marja'iat persisted in taking in Shiite society throughout history, it remained the source of religious knowledge until "religion" became the goods of Marja'iat, while "education" was the goods of the graduates of secular schooling—those who studied in the universities and not in seminaries. Therefore, it traditionally was up to one to choose, whether to be religious or educated, or whether to unite the two and, by that, invent something new and unfamiliar.

For this reason, the educated religious trend has echoed in Iranian reality to the extent that the appearance of that trend caused sensitivity and alert among the pillars

Marja'iat, those who launch attacks against the trend's symbols in the form of a cold war. The pursuit of Dr. Soroushi represents one of its clear expressions. As for the attack on KIAN magazine by the Hezbollah youth, it is a message that reveals in earnestness the probabilities of escalation of that war. And the most important thing in all this is that the total picture reflects an exciting side of the changes taking place in Iranian society.

The event in effect led to a reprinting three times of the issue that published engineer Bazargan's talk. The number of subscribers to the magazine has doubled and it is possible for it to increase its circulation by half. But, the warning message is clear. For the magazine, and the educated religious trend, whose project the magazine embraces, are fighting on two fronts—the front of the defense of freedom and democracy, and the front of penetration of the hegemony of seminaries over religious speech. And it is, by any measure, a long and costly war.

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